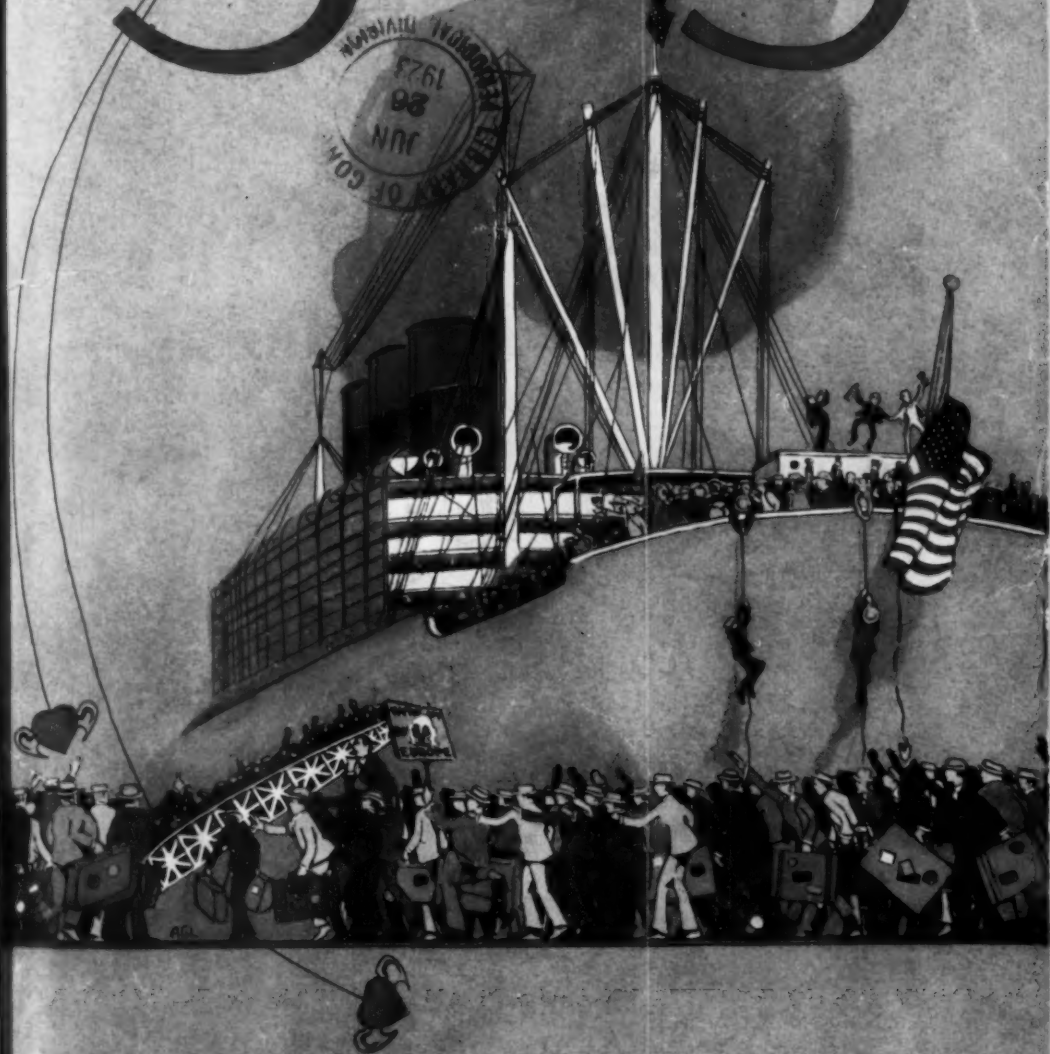


JULY, 1923

35 Cent

The SMART SET

Edited by
George Jean Nathan
and
H.L. Mencken.



Life: Literature: Criticism: Wit:

"Venida rules the waves"



Summer Comfort

VENIDA
The Guaranteed
HAIR NET

SINGLE AND DOUBLE MESH
CAP AND FRINGE SHAPES

2 for 25c

*We suggest the invisible single mesh
for dress and evening wear and
double mesh for sport wear.*

AT the seashore or country—Dress
your hair becomingly in the morning
and enjoy the satisfaction and comfort of
knowing that you are looking your best
throughout the entire day.

Let the breezes blow and the sports be gay,
VENIDA will protect the beauty of your
hairdress.

Ask the charming women who look so fresh, so neat
and cool—they will tell you their secret.

Take a supply of Venidas with you on your vaca-
tion—they save both time and temper and are uncon-
ditionally guaranteed to give you entire satisfaction.

For sale at all good shops.

The Rieser Co., Inc., 220 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

HAVE YOU TRIED THE NEW Venida CLINTONIC TWIN SOAPS
HELP PREVENT AND RELIEVE SUNBURN

JUN 23 1923

©C18579572e

Vol. LXXI

JULY, 1923

No. 3

The
SMART SET
The
Aristocrat
Among
Magazines



Tom O' Bedlam

By Basil Thompson

An angel of the light is in my soul
And in my soul is a droll dark devil,
And the droll dark devil and the angel of the light
Keep in my soul a mad merry revel.

Says the spirit of the light to the spirit of the dark,
"Whatever is the matter, you murky little sprite?"
"Whatever is the matter is whatever is the matter,"
Says the spirit of the dark to the spirit of the light.

And they chirp and they chatter, "Now whatever is the matter?"
"And whatever is the matter," they clatter and cajole,
And it's this and it's that to a mad merry revel
Till it's seventeen hells in my poor damned soul.

An angel of the light is in my soul
And in my soul is a droll dark devil,
And the droll dark devil and the angel of the light
Keep in my soul an insane revel.

"Venida rules the waves"



Summer Comfort

VENIDA
The Guaranteed
HAIR NET

SINGLE AND DOUBLE MESH
CAP AND FRINGE SHAPES

2 for 25c

*We suggest the invisible single mesh
for dress and evening wear and
double mesh for sport wear.*

AT the seashore or country—Dress
your hair becomingly in the morning
and enjoy the satisfaction and comfort of
knowing that you are looking your best
throughout the entire day.

Let the breezes blow and the sports be gay,
VENIDA will protect the beauty of your
hairdress.

Ask the charming women who look so fresh, so neat
and cool—they will tell you their secret.

Take a supply of Venidas with you on your vaca-
tion—they save both time and temper and are uncon-
ditionally guaranteed to give you entire satisfaction.

For sale at all good shops.

The Rieser Co., Inc., 220 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

HAVE YOU TRIED THE NEW Venida CLINTONIC TWIN SOAPS
HELP PREVENT AND RELIEVE SUNBURN

The microfilm contents of this roll

Imperfections such as missing issue

pagination have been verified with

ll were recorded as available.

ues, missing pages, errors in

ith the bound volume after filming.



V

JUN 23 1923

©C18579572e

Vol. LXXI

JULY, 1923

No. 3

The
SMART SET
The
Aristocrat
Among
Magazines



Tom O' Bedlam

By Basil Thompson

An angel of the light is in my soul
And in my soul is a droll dark devil,
And the droll dark devil and the angel of the light
Keep in my soul a mad merry revel.

Says the spirit of the light to the spirit of the dark,
"Whatever is the matter, you murky little sprite?"
"Whatever is the matter is whatever is the matter,"
Says the spirit of the dark to the spirit of the light.

And they chirp and they chatter, "Now whatever is the matter?"
"And whatever is the matter," they clatter and cajole,
And it's this and it's that to a mad merry revel
Till it's seventeen hells in my poor damned soul.

An angel of the light is in my soul
And in my soul is a droll dark devil,
And the droll dark devil and the angel of the light
Keep in my soul an insane revel.

On a Certain Subject

By Charles G. Shaw

I

I DARE you to produce the woman who will forgive a man for breaking an engagement with her, or for not breaking an engagement with another woman.

II

IN order to win a woman, all that a man need do is to please her. This is often accomplished by his lack of respect for her.

III

A test of *l'amour*—the desire to be with the object of one's affections, not when in the society of dull, depressing people, but when surrounded by brilliant, jovial, merry companions.

IV

THE man who seeks to attract a woman by lavish splurge and show is usually the fellow who, later, blames her for being attracted by such splurge and show.

V

A woman is wretched until she dis-

covers the man of her desire. Then she is usually more wretched than before.

VI

ANY man would rather gaze upon a beautiful woman than listen to an ugly one, just as any woman would rather be in love with a man than respect him.

VII

A woman realizes that she is able to care for a man long before a man realizes that he is able to care for a woman. In fact, she will often realize this before she even sets eyes on the fellow in question.

VIII

How often is the fellow that is believed to be a devil by his wife the deadliest of bores to other women!

IX

A woman may attract a man for one of many reasons: beauty, simplicity, gentleness, sympathy, charm. But never does she attract him for the reason that she fancies to be the one.



La Grippe Espagnole

[A Complete Novelette]

By Peter Quinn

CHAPTER I

WITH a graceful, caressing twist of her slim, nervous body, the Baroness Lulu Heller disengaged herself from the young man's embrace and sank into the soft powdery snow.

"You must be in love with my Princess!" she said.

Maurice Travers, attaché to the American Embassy at Rome, removed his skis and planted them upright in the snowfield. They seemed, from where Lulu was sitting, the masts of an enormous white ship adrift in the blue wastes of the sky.

"I, in love with Princess Irène? Who put that idea into your head?" and he flung himself in the snow next to Lulu.

"She's such a darling!" said the little Baroness. "I don't see how any man can help falling in love with her."

"She's certainly very lovely," agreed Travers. "Almost beautiful, with her long gray eyes and strong, graceful body. And then she's so unaffected and jolly. Not at all what one expects in royalty. But . . ."

"But what?" queried Lulu.

"I can't think of her as a woman. She romps like an overgrown schoolgirl." Travers laughed. "She was so funny last night in the covered tennis court of the Palace—playing leap frog with her brother and myself. And she seemed to think it the most marvelous joke in the world when her garters broke and her stockings fell down."

"She's hardly a schoolgirl," spoke Lulu, sinking back in the dry fluffy snow. "She was twenty-two last September."

"That's what I find so peculiar."

"They're all like that—very stiff and official during the day; then, when everybody has gone to bed, playing pranks like a bunch of children. Of course, sometimes, they do go too far. See the way they treat Parmenides, the King's aide-de-camp, who has been with the court all through the exile. He's always the butt of their jokes. The other day they put bad-smelling powders in his room—the whole floor was infested with the odor. And last night they filled his bed with snow. Poor boy! He caught a severe chill. He's been in bed ever since. And do you know the way the Princess wakes me up in the morning? She fills her mouth with cold water and sprinkles me with it. She holds the long distance spitting record. It has won her quite a reputation in royal circles. The Danish Princes are terribly jealous of her."

"They're certainly a strange crew," said Travers. "And the King—does he go in for farce, too?"

"Very seldom—never during the day. It wouldn't look well, you know. But sometimes he amuses himself at night, after eleven, when the Queen is officially sleeping."

"I've seen him walking about Badrutt's park every morning followed by a detective. A rather pathetic figure!"

"He's a nice man," said the Baroness. "So devoted to his children! He likes them to have a good time. Poor things! There's so little left for them to enjoy."

They were silent for an interval, gazing across the Engadine valley at the great peaks of the Bernina range, a jagged white silhouette against the ultra-

marine sky. Below, around the lake, dotted here and there with the tiny moving figures of skijorers and skaters, stood patches of yellow, green and gray, the houses of St. Moritz Dorf. Not a breath stirred the clear mountain air—it might have been midsummer, so strong was the beat of the sun.

"Why did you ask me," Travers inquired, "whether I was in love with the Princess?"

"Because you appear to like me," answered Lulu, and she rested her little sharp head on his shoulder.

"Isn't that an odd reason?"

"It's the usual reason. I'm her Lady-in-Waiting. Men usually make up to me to get closer to her."

"I think you misjudge me," said Travers.

A light of affectionate merriment slid into her brown eyes.

"Perhaps I do!" she murmured. "But the Princess and I always have the same flirts. She's jolly and gay, you know, but at the same time rather unapproachable. Her admirers never dare declare themselves directly. Now, as you have discovered,"—she nestled closer to him—"I'm not so unapproachable. They know—I don't mean you particularly, but most of her suitors—that I have every access to her. That's how I become their *confidante*. I repeat messages, carry letters, now and then arrange a short interview. Of course, I always have to be present. But the Princess does not mind. She's very shy, she would not know what to say if she were left alone with them. As nothing ever happens—the Queen is very particular about this—they grow impatient at times. It is my rôle to console them, to be sympathetic. Of course it would be easy to discourage them. But the dear girl has so few amusements. And then . . ."

"And then?"

"I have to let them be nice to me. And it happens, now and then, that they fall in love."

"So you take their affections away from the Princess?"

"Oh, not at all. There is no compe-

tition whatever between us. They remain in love with her, but their affection becomes a sort of fairy-tale love, a platonic infatuation. Men are men, you know, they need something else. I suppose their sentiments for me are more *terre-à-terre*."

"It's as thou^gh," said Travers, with a touch of sarcasm, "she were an angel in some unapproachable heaven and you her representative on earth."

"That's about it," said the Baroness. "How well you understand. And I thought Americans were obtuse. It's not always amusing," she said with a sigh, "to keep playing my part."

"You know," said Travers, stirred by a hint of sadness in her, "that it is you I'm in love with. It is utterly indifferent to me that you are lady-in-waiting to Princess Irène."

"That's very sweet and polite of you," returned Lulu.

Travers drew her to him and kissed her. She quivered prettily—too prettily, he thought, there seemed more play than passion in her abandon. Though she kissed him freely, with no show of resistance, her kisses tasted more merry than warm. It was as though he had touched nothing vital in her, but merely her sense of excitement.

Even when she lay passively in his arms, he was conscious of a soft mockery in her. She appeared to be laughing even when tears dimmed her eyes, laughing at him, at herself, at the game of hazard and love.

Travers felt injured and slighted. Almost roughly he thrust her aside.

"You do not love me!" he cried.

Her lashes and the corners of her lips quivered. She gave him the illusion of trying very hard to be serious.

"Of course I love you," she said.

Her voice, the twist of her slim, supple body, the dance in her eyes, had the insinuating warmth and play of a Viennese waltz.

"If you cared for me," said Travers deliberately, "you would leave the court and come away with me."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when he knew that he had

spoken foolishly. She sat straight up in the snow, looked at him ruefully.

"Why spoil everything?" she complained. "That's the way with you Anglo-Saxons. You ask absurd questions and you are hurt if one gives you unpleasant replies. You compel one to search into oneself. And when one begins to search, one does not know what one will find. Perhaps a great emptiness—no love for anyone—anything." Then, with a quick rush of gaiety: "But let us not be heavy and solemn. It's out of place—here in St. Moritz. Let us love the snow, the sun and the wind—each other, too, if it's not too difficult."

And Travers laughed. He could not be angry with her. One could not be angry with anyone in St. Moritz, where the key mood was folly and mirth. What did it matter if people were artificial—insincere? They did not think, they hardly lived—if life was searching and gravity. They played with the gloss and patterns of things. They danced, drank, skied, sleighed, flirted and curled. Nothing really mattered. The main thing was to be light, careless and gay.

CHAPTER II

PRESENTLY the sun sank behind Piz Julier. A pink flush spread over the crests of the peaks across the valley. Long, cool, blue shadows floated down from Piz Nair, blotting out the yellow-white snowfields.

Shivering from cold, Lulu and Travers skied down the long slopes toward St. Moritz. It was more like flying than sliding, the soft downy snow offering no resistance to their travel, an impression confirmed by the rush of cold wind about them.

Suddenly, as he dipped precipitously into a hollow, Travers heard a shrill cry behind him. Stopping abruptly by an amateurish Christiania which all but flung him head first in the snow, he turned to perceive, far up on the incline, two skis horizontally swaying. Nothing more of the little Baroness was visible, save two purple stockings and the hem of an orange skirt.

Travers climbed up to her, pulled her out of the drift, unraveled the tangle of clothes, woman and skis. She was not injured, only a trifle dazed by her fall. She laughed merrily, shaking the white clinging snow from curls, dress and cheek.

In a vast amphitheater scooped out of the mountains and still washed by sunlight, they came across a party of St. Moritzers, wearing bright-colored sweaters and scarves which shone crudely against the white background.

Travers recognized the Duke of Burjos, a tall, thin Spaniard whose long head recalled Velasquez's portrait of Philip IV. Though scarcely proficient at skiing himself, he was teaching a dark little Peruvian woman how to talemarch. A typical cosmopolitan group stood watching him: two lean South Americans, a tittering lady from Paris, and the Duchess of Valladolid, sister to the Duke, a small, nervous woman with a complexion tanned like a gypsy's and quick, intelligent eyes.

They were all laughing boisterously: the lady from Paris, it appeared, had said something spiteful and clever regarding the Duke's protégée. To the right, on the steeper part of the slope, two young Swiss sportsmen were performing a number of acrobatic feats, twisting and leaping on their skis. Nobody, however, paid them the smallest attention. It was evident that they did not belong to the charmed circle.

Suddenly the lady from Paris ceased to titter, all but the Duke and Duchess exhibited symptoms of self-consciousness. Coming toward the group by a narrow path that cut across the snowfield, Travers saw a tall man in a formal town overcoat. Twenty paces behind followed a little man with a bowler hat. They both appeared comically out of place in the gay scheme of sport and color. They might have been Presbyterian mourners at an Oriental bazaar.

"The King," whispered Lulu to Travers. "Let's go. I don't feel like being official."

A short slope brought them to the forest. They skied through the wooded

maze, twisting in and out of the trees which seemed strange gargantuan flowers, so laden were they with great cones of snow. Then down a steep icy road which carried them with much perilous speed down into the heart of St. Moritz.

"I must leave you now," said the Baroness. "The Princess has asked me to buy her some books. It's really extraordinary how the girl reads."

"What are you going to get for her?"

"Oh, the novels of Elinor Glyn, I suppose. It is time she knew something about life. I'll see you at the Kulm ball tonight."

Travers removed his skis and entered Hanselmann's, a confectioner on the steep, crooked street whither the gilded fashion of St. Moritz repaired at the hour of tea.

For a moment he gazed dully about him, rather dazed by the warm air and bluster of voices after his afternoon in the sun and snow.

"I would ask you to sit down with us," said Edna Allen, a sharp-featured, pleasant-faced American girl with much curly brown hair. "But we're going to the tango-tea at the Carlton."

"You do look a sight," said Simone de Guiche, Edna's boon companion of the hour, a neat, rather vulgar little French woman. "I don't see what pleasure you people find in throwing yourselves about in the snow."

Travers laughed. It was common knowledge that Edna and Simone never ventured forth before sunset for fear of ruining their complexions.

"Why do you ever come to St. Moritz?" he asked. "Why don't you stay in Lausanne?"

"What can we do?" laughed Simone. "The men *will* come here. Such children—never happy unless they're in danger of breaking their arms and legs. As if *we* were not sufficiently dangerous!"

"I used to ski four seasons ago," said Edna. "But when a woman is twenty-four she must take care of her skin. Every day men are becoming harder to please."

Travers felt a hand on his shoulder.

He turned to gaze into the small beady eyes of a diminutive man with an amiable black moustached countenance.

"Why Prince Venturini!" cried Travers. "When did you arrive?"

"Last night, *caro mio*," yawned the Italian. "Excuse me, I'm just out of bed."

"Is the Princess in good health?"

The little Prince nodded.

"She's here," he said, "having tea with the Malombras. She sent me to ask you to join us."

Travers felt an unpleasant sinking within him as he crossed the room with the Prince. Principessa Gloria Venturini was the one woman he was particularly desirous of avoiding.

CHAPTER III

TRAVERS bent over Gloria Venturini's hand, pressed his lips to her fingers. She was a tall dark girl of some twenty odd years, perhaps on first appearance a trifle too slender, what the French call a *fausse maigre*. It was not merely her beauty, the Florentine silhouette of her features which recalled the Boticelli Medici portraits, that attracted men to her, but rather a certain animal aura that seemed ever spinning about her. The sort of woman whose sex you would immediately recognize through the most skilful masculine travesty, who could not make a movement without making you aware of the lines and curves of her body.

Her deep eyes, which she could force to tell any story she willed, contained now, as she looked across the table at Travers, a yielding, almost a passionate softness. At the same time, mocking, as it were, the complete surrender in them, a faint ironical smile curved on her long lips, as though she were aware of Travers' uneasiness, and moved to amusement thereby.

"I think you know everyone," she said in a low chanting voice which gave to the commonplaces she invariably uttered a certain mysterious significance. "Principe and Principessa Malombra. My cousin—Maria Montughi."

Travers kissed the hand of Princess Antonia Malombra, a quick, terse little woman with black critical eyes, reputed to possess the sharpest tongue in Roman society. Then, having shaken the hand of the Prince, a heavy middle-aged man whose chief claim to distinction lay in his air of perpetual ennui, he said to La Venturini:

"I have not the honor of knowing Signorina Maria Montughi."

"How careless of me!" said Gloria Venturini.

She performed the introduction:

"Chiffoneta, this is Mr. Travers, one of our rising young diplomats. You wouldn't think him American, he makes love so beautifully. He doesn't mean a word he says—just like one of us. Mr. Travers—Maria Montughi who we call Chiffoneta. You two should get on capitally. She's been to school in England. That's where she's learned to pout and look shy."

Maria Montughi, a full-breasted girl of eighteen with copper hair and wide scowling gray eyes, darted a furious glance at her cousin. The sullen droop of her generous lips, which seemed to reflect considerable inner bad humor, added at first appearance at least ten years to her age.

"You see we've pursued you," laughed La Malombra. "Rome was desolate as the Sahara after you had gone."

"I hear there's nobody here this season," said Princess Venturini. "I count on you to amuse me, Mr. Travers."

And again she fixed him with her large melting eyes.

"There's the court," said Travers.

Princess Malombra sighed.

"You mean the King and Queen and their gawky children. If only they didn't dress so dowdily! They expect you to dance attendance on them during the day and play leap-frog at night."

"I've got dresses for skiing, bobbing and skating, but not a rag suited for leap-frog," complained La Venturini.

La Malombra turned to her husband who was yawning across the table:

"Where are your manners, Filippo?"

What will Mr. Travers think of the Italian aristocracy?"

"Why didn't we go to Monte Carlo?" moaned Prince Venturini.

He glanced out of the window at the chill, frozen peaks and his frail shoulders shook. "What can a normal man with no inclination for suicide find to do in this snow?"

"These husbands!" said La Malombra to La Venturini. "What shall we do with them? Why didn't we leave them in Rome?"

She turned to Travers.

"Any pretty shop girls in the village?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said Travers, laughing.

"Well do try and dig one out of the snow. Filippo must have his shop girl, otherwise he's quite unsupportable. Something bashful and Swiss with pink cheeks and red hands."

La Venturini leaned toward Travers.

"Who was that girl you were talking to when you entered the room? I don't mean Simone de Guiche. I know who she is—a Parisian cocotte who married Van Standen, the Amsterdam banker, and then divorced him for the young Marquis de Guiche. I mean the other one—the one with fuzzy brown hair?"

"You mean Edna Allen?"

"Oh, I know who she is, Gloria cara," cried La Malombra, her little eyes brightening. "An American girl, daughter of that Allen who made I don't know how many millions in oil. She's been here five seasons. The stories they tell about her! Five affairs each winter. Always young boys, too. *Elle les dégoûdât*. How the world changes! That used to be our rôle—robbing the cradle. But now we married women have to be contented with the left-overs. When it comes to left-overs, we might as well as not be faithful to our husbands! But the mother is the pearl of that family. I've seen her look as young as her daughter. She has a meek, innocent face, wears débutante clothes, but you should see her eyes if you but look at one of her men. They say she has had intrigues with the younger sons of half the crowned heads of Europe. She

pretends to have second sight, to see in the stars. And the old man, Mr. Allen, the oil king, do you think he minds his wife's adventures? No, on the contrary, he is proud of her success. They even say he escorts her on her yearly visits to Prince Otto of Arensburg."

Travers addressed Maria Montughi, who had not uttered a word in the conversation.

"How do you like St. Moritz?"

"How do I know?" she answered sullenly. "I'm only here since yesterday."

"You'll like the sports," continued Travers, "the skiing and sleighing and bobbing. You can't imagine how exhilarating it is to fly through the snow."

"It sounds silly to me," she said.

Travers laughed lightly. "Everyone is foolish here. It's in the air. You'll feel it. It goes to your head like champagne."

The young girl shrugged her shoulders impatiently. She had the air of a strong practical peasant girl dismissing the advances of some village lout.

"I hate foolish people," she said.

Then, with a scowling glance toward Princesses Malombra and Venturini still busily engaged in tearing reputations: "It's to make me angry that they call me Chiffoneta."

Travers was amused. It flashed on him at that instant that her scowling demeanor was but a childish device to hide her natural timidity.

"I think Chiffoneta is very pretty as a name."

"It's silly," she said, blushing and breaking into a rich open smile. And Travers marveled. It was like the bursting of wild summer sunshine through a thunder cloud.

"I always said you were irresistible," said Princess Venturini to Travers. "You've made the child look almost human. We're all afraid of her."

Chiffoneta bit her lips and rose from the table. "Don't be ridiculous, Gloria."

Then, very self consciously: "I think I'll go down to the hotel and unpack."

"Don't mind her," said La Venturini to Travers after Chiffoneta had gone.

"The girl is a savage. And she used to

be very friendly before she went to England. I wonder what they did to her there—taught her their bad manners and gave her poetry to read."

Prince Venturini rose lazily.

"Filipo and I are going for a walk in the village," he said. "Mr. Travers will take you back to the Hotel."

"I do hope they pick up someone," sighed La Malombra after the two men had gone. "They're both ridiculous, following us all day like a couple of tame cats."

Travers addressed Gloria Venturini: "Do you expect to go in for sports?"

She paused for a moment before answering him.

She seemed to regard him amusedly, almost superiorly, as though he had uttered something childish and comic.

"Don't you think," she said slowly, leaning toward him so that he felt her warm breath on his cheek, "that I have sufficient sport in life without tossing myself about in the snow?"

Though the crude cynicism of her methods repelled him, his blood was caught by her magnetism. With her eyes, with her lips she seemed to be giving all of herself to him.

Travers made an effort to control his agitation. He had the uncanny illusion that her lips had eyes, so ironically did they appear to be mocking his struggle.

"You might care for bobbing," he hazarded.

"I think I would," she answered, again melting toward him. "There's nothing to do but to sit down. I hear the Derby is being run week after next. Will you take me down on your bob?"

"I'm sorry," said Travers. "I have already asked the Baroness Heller. There's only place for one woman."

"It's a pity," she said. "I would like to have raced with you. I'm sure you'll win. You have so much *sang froid*, Mr. Travers."

Once more her lips mocked him. And Travers knew, by the cool almost bored quality of her voice, that she was very angry with him.

"Baroness Heller," said La Malom-

bra. "I seem to have heard that name before."

"She is the lady-in-waiting to Princess Irène," said Travers.

La Venturini looked at him reproachfully.

"I suppose you'll abandon your old friends now that you have been taken up by the Court."

"Has the King borrowed money of you?" asked Antonia Malombra.

"You won't have a minute to yourself," said Gloria. "And when they have no more use for you they will toss you aside like a pair of old shoes."

"I hope you won't have to eat with them," pursued La Malombra. "Their table manners are bad enough to take away anyone's appetite."

La Venturini laughed.

"Isn't Antonia delightful?" she inquired of Travers.

The two women joined hands and exchanged the warmest of glances.

Travers was amused, for he knew how intensely they detested each other. A state of continual warfare existed between them. They set snares for the same men, often shared the same lovers. In spite of La Venturini's beauty, the contest was not unequal, owing to La Malombra's more elastic intelligence. Despite their mutual hatred they were always together. Neither trusted her rival out of her sight.

Suddenly a hush fell on the room. Everyone in Hanselmann's arose from their chairs. The Princess Irène, a girl who always impressed Travers as a young Arcadian shepherdess, entered the confectioner's with her lady-in-waiting to purchase some chocolates. Having finished her shopping she took a few steps in the direction of the table near which Travers was standing.

"I'm so glad you have arrived," she said to Princess Malombra, who curtsied deeply. "We are very quiet this winter, but I hope to see you at the Carlton. You too, Princess Venturini."

"Your Royal Highness is very gracious," said La Venturini, and she curtsied low.

"And remember, Mr. Travers," con-

tinued Princess Irène, "you've promised to give me my revenge at tennis." Then, in a merry undertone: "If you beat me, I'll bite your leg."

Whereupon, breaking into giggles, the Royal Princess took her departure from Hanselmann's.

"A charming girl!" said La Venturini.

"So gracious of her," said Antonia Malombra, "to be so unceremonious."

"That pink sweater suits her so well."

"Such grace, poise and carriage."

"Ah, yes, you can say what you will, but her people certainly have race."

"What snobs!" thought Travers as he escorted the two Princesses back to the Palace. "They pretend to despise Royalty, yet they are more flattered than anyone else when the Court deigns to notice them."

CHAPTER IV

TRAVERS was troubled. It was principally to get away from Gloria Venturini that he had come to St. Moritz on a three weeks' vacation.

He had met her at Rome early in the autumn, at a reception of the Spanish Embassy. He had seen her there in the company of Serge Ivanovitch Tamaroff, a lumbering giant of a man, fiercely moustached, who had earned an almost international reputation by the immense sums he squandered yearly at Monte Carlo and his casual treatment of women. Gloria Venturini, very lovely and frail in the shadow of this rough towering Slav, had filled Travers with a certain compassion. Having had little experience of women of the European aristocracy, he did not know that she was more than a match for Tamaroff. "*C'est la pitié qui perd les femmes*," runs a French proverb. It is certainly pity, Travers muttered ruefully, that makes fools of men.

Though certain rumors reached him concerning Gloria's promiscuous amours Travers had paid little heed to them. One day he inquired why she went in Roman society by the name of "La Grippe Espagnole." The answer—"parce que tout le monde l'a eue," had thrown him into indignation.

"It's the invention of scandalmongers, women who are jealous of her," he cried, which shows that he was already on the road to infatuation.

Serge went to Paris. La Venturini, who was miserable unless she had a fresh victim in tow, looked about her. Her eye fell on Maurice Travers. He was not bad looking, he dressed well, he had an official position; she could condescend to him, therefore, without loss of prestige.

What appealed to her most, however, was his youthful enthusiasm. Most of her admirers were blasé, they were born with old blood in their veins, even their first declaration of love, though flamboyantly, passionately uttered, had a jest tangled in it. She felt that the flame of adventure in this young man was not dimmed by the smoke of adventures. Then one day she saw him driving in the Pincio with Antonia Malombra. Gloria thought to remark something protective, almost possessive in her rival's attitude toward the young man. That decided La Venturini. She laid her snares for Travers.

Then began a duel, of which at the start Travers was completely unconscious, between the two Roman Princesses. Wherever he went the young attaché saw Gloria Venturini. He met her at dinners, receptions, danced with her at balls, hunted with her at the drag.

She did not talk much to him, but contrived to adopt in his presence a melancholy, misunderstood air. She would let her great soft eyes rest on him, and he would see in them what she wanted him to see—strange depths of mystery and gloom. Sometimes, in a strained voice, she would mention her husband, and her eyes would be dimmed with tears. And as Venturini's escapades with milkmaids were the talk of the town, Travers put two and two together and decided that she suffered from neglect.

Still Travers was slow in declaring himself. He probably thought it impossible that so high and lovely a lady could be moved by his adoration. Desirous of hastening matters, Gloria all but swooned in his arms as she danced

with him the night of the American Embassy ball. So quick was the rush of his blood that he experienced considerable difficulty in steering her through the maze of the dance. He had the sensation that he was being whirled round and round in an eddy of tingling electricity.

Two days later he received a short note from her. She suffered from headache; would he not drop in and amuse her? He arrived, very nervous and stiff, with an armful of gorgeous red roses. It took her exactly five minutes to draw his story from him.

The completeness of her abandon convinced Travers that Gloria Venturini was in love with him. She wept when she yielded herself. She had the fear and joy of a young girl loving for the first time.

The door of the Palazzo Venturini had hardly closed behind Travers, when Gloria broke into a wild peal of laughter. She laughed long and loud, her slim body shaking. Then, feeling that in her hour of victory she must see her rival, she rang up Princess Malombra. The two women spent a merry evening together, discussing the scandals of Rome. And though Travers' name was not mentioned, Gloria's unusually affectionate manner informed Antonia Malombra of her defeat.

A few days later Travers met La Venturini at the drag hunt.

She was riding to hounds with the Marquis de Lignac, a thin pale youth of the Breton nobility. She bowed distantly to Travers, but took no further notice of him. All the joyous fever which had leaped in him at the sight of her was converted into a dull weight of pain.

Again as they rode home through the Campagna, he attempted to speak to her. She hardly answered him, but talked to Lignac in soft, insinuating whispers. Finally, unable to endure the torture any longer, Travers galloped away.

Half an hour later she joined him. "Why are you looking so black?" she inquired.

It was then, for the first time, that he

noticed the ironical twist of her lips. "You know," he said sullenly. "Let's get down and walk."

She dismounted obediently. Suddenly he caught her to him.

"You are rude," she said, coolly disengaging an apathetic body from his arms.

All through November she continued to lead him a dance. More often at social functions she had no eye for him. She had other quarry to snare: the little Marquis de Lignac, paler and paler as his intimacy with her progressed; Serge Tamaroff, who had come back from Paris; also various members of the Italian aristocracy whom she always kept at the right pitch of expectation for hours of crisis or ennui.

Thus, little by little, Travers came to know her. Though he took his medicine hard, he was too proud and obstinate to content himself with the part of the luckless lover. He seemed to grow considerably older in the weeks which followed; he gained in hardness, strength, elasticity. With all the will power in him he struggled against her fascinations. But even when she appeared to neglect him, she kept an eye on him. The moment she felt him drawing away from her, she would stir his passion, yield softly to him, convince him of her love. The next day she would hardly talk to him and Travers would have to start the struggle all over again.

One afternoon at Tivoli—she had been very tender to him—he asked her to divorce her husband.

For once La Venturini was astonished.

"Divorce poor old Guido! He could not get on without me."

"You surely don't suspect him of fidelity?"

"I amuse myself," Gloria answered placidly, laying her head on Travers' shoulder. "Why shouldn't he? Besides, you forget I'm a Catholic."

"You can get a dispensation."

"I might—I suppose. I have friends at the Vatican. But it would create such a scandal."

"But, you don't seem to mind . . ."

S. S.—July—2

"There are scandals and scandals, *caro mio*. Even I draw the line at divorce."

Travers came to hate her. Even when she was affectionate, submissive, rocked him in the warmth of her passion, even then he loathed her. It was not love—this savage tenseness which made him desirous of hurting her. Like the fair cruel ladies of the Renaissance—the Borgias, the Visconti, the Medici, she seemed to exhale from every pore of her some exotic treacherous aroma that whipped to frenzy the victims who were caught in her spell.

One day in early December, while Travers was taking a solitary walk through the Campagna Romana, he came across Marchese Valombrosa. The Marchese was an old man of some sixty years, with a short pointed white beard, a rough weatherbeaten face and soft kindly pale eyes.

Travers had heard marvelous tales concerning the old gentleman; it seemed that he had been quite a Don Juan in his time. He now enjoyed a remarkable vitality, he was present at all balls and social gatherings, he was known to walk forty miles in a day.

"I haven't seen you around lately," he said to Travers as they walked home along the Appian Way.

"A touch of grippe," said Travers.

"Not Spanish grippe?" said the old man, and he smiled.

And as Travers did not answer him:

"One can admire a woman, flirt with her, make love to her, but it seems quite unnecessary to even fall in love."

Travers regarded the Marchese curiously. "You astonish me. Rome is still talking about your adventures."

"I have always loved life" said the Marchese, "the movement and color and sap of it, and women are part of life. They have such pretty ways with their lips, eyes and arms, that make you feel happy and warm. But even in the heat of passion I was never entirely submerged. My fancy was ever being caught by the passing skirt of some other woman, the malice and promise in some other smile. I have loved women

too much, I suppose, to ever love one woman exclusively. Love for one woman destroys you, blinds you to life, you see nothing but her, or—if she deals hardly with you—that other thing—death. Ah, my dear man, do you think I could walk forty miles in a day if I had let myself be absorbed by one passion? Could I find such delight and joy in the taste of the sun and rain?"

He filled his chest with the soft Roman air.

"Why don't you take a vacation?" he said, "I know your ambassador, I'll tell him you need a change. Go to St. Moritz. Nobody thinks there—the air is too light and gay. Nobody loves there, one is in love all the time. There are a dozen women as fair as La Venturini. Let them all turn your head. That's living! That's youth!"

For a while they walked on in silence, the Marchese leaning on Travers' arm.

"You're not angry with me for meddling?" said the Marchese as they entered Rome.

Travers smiled.

"Of course not," he said. "I think I shall take your advice."

"I knew you were not a fool," said the Marchese.

CHAPTER V

"I do like talking things over with you," said Edna Allen to Travers as they lingered over their liqueurs in the ballroom of the Kulm Hotel. "You make me feel so natural. I seem to tell you everything. I suppose it's because we have never been in love with each other."

And she gave a thin, throaty laugh.

She had been telling him how she had decided to break her engagement with Olivagoya, a Peruvian she had met that autumn at Territet. Travers, who had not listened very attentively, gathered that a Russian, a Spaniard, and two doubtful ladies from Geneva had been involved in the tangle.

"How many times," he asked her, "have you been engaged?"

She pondered a moment, twisting and pressing herself into the soft leather of

her chair in an ecstasy of physical comfort.

"Let me see," she said, counting on her fingers. "There was Robert Turnbull, the tennis player. He hardly counts, I was such a child. I had the American notion that men despise you if you let them kiss you. Then Mario, a Sicilian count. I was really in love with him, though I can hardly remember his face. Baron Hoopmann, a Hungarian, that makes three. Pepito, a horrible Spaniard, and his cousin Toño. Then Stewart Manners, an Englishman. I think sometimes that I'm in love with him still. A pity he was so British and had so little knowledge of women. André, a Frenchman, he understood women too well. That's why I hate Frenchmen now, I suppose? And then Olivagoya. I think that makes nine."

"Why do you get engaged?" asked Travers. "You surely did not intend to marry each one of them?"

"I don't know," she replied. "I suppose it's my education. I was brought up in the south—in Tennessee. I have the feeling that everything is permitted if one is engaged."

Travers laughed and gazed at the crowd pouring into the ballroom.

"What a lot of new faces!" he exclaimed.

Edna's lip curled disdainfully. "An awfully common crowd, with the exception of the court and a few Spaniards and Italians."

"Who is that animated woman in black standing in the doorway?" asked Travers.

"Oh you know!" answered Edna. "That's Mrs. Oliver Richards. Her first husband, Sands, left her a fortune. Then she married Richards, the Kansas City millionaire. She divorced him last year. They say she's going to marry the Prince."

"What Prince?"

"Prince Stéphanie of Montania. He's talking to her now."

"He looks like a yokel," said Travers.

"They're all like that in Montania," laughed Edna. "They say the King lives in a hut and sleeps on straw and that

Her Royal Highness milks the cows. But Mrs. Richards is very civilized. Always in black, to show off her complexion. It is said that she sleeps in black satin sheets."

"And who's that blotchy-faced woman talking to the Duke of Burjos and his sister? She looks like a chorus girl."

"She used to be. Don't you remember Stella Lawrence of the Ziegfeld Follies? But now she's the Duchess of Worcester."

"Anything between her and Burjos?"

"I don't know for sure. It's not her fault if there isn't. Madame Saint Hilaire is furious with jealousy. She's been three years with the Duke."

"His sister, the Duchess of Valladolid, appears very well disposed toward her. I remember now how she used to dislike Madame de Saint Hilaire."

"That's merely because she was consumptive. Poor woman! While the Duke is amusing himself they say she is dying in Davos."

Travers smiled across the room at the Baroness Heller who had entered the room with Parmenides.

"By the way, Maurice," said Edna, "will you lunch with us on Friday? Mother is giving a party for the King and his court. You know them, don't you?"

Travers nodded.

"I shall be very glad to come," he said.

"Mother and I," pursued Edna, "are both in love with the Crown Prince, the Duke of Thebes. He's so good looking. And I simply adore his younger brother, Prince Peter. Don't you think he's a darling!"

"I played tennis with him and his sister at the Palace."

"Such delightful people!" continued Edna. "So simple, you know. Not like those Italian snobs. By the way, what do you think of La Venturini? All the men are in love with her. They talk of nothing else. . . . I find it sickening."

"Oh, she's good looking, I suppose," said Travers casually. "But very *mauvais genre*. There are any number of more attractive women in St. Moritz."

"That's what I think," said Edna. "But I can't find a man to agree with me."

"I'm sure you can find plenty of women who hold that opinion," said Travers, smiling.

The band struck up a fox trot. William Van Thorbecke, a blond, vacuous Dutchman, walked over to Edna and claimed the dance.

"Don't forget about Friday," said Edna to Travers. Then, in a low voice: "I wish the Low Countries didn't breed such long feet."

Travers made his way to where La Venturini was sitting, surrounded by a group of Italians.

He was determined not to let her know how nervous she made him and asked her for the dance.

She laughed at him coolly.

"Why are you always too late, Mr. Travers? I've given this dance to the Marquis."

"But you know, *chère Princesse*," said Lignac with a dry self-conscious giggle, "that I do not know the fox trot."

"Then you'll take me for a walk in the park." And very caressingly: "The moon is so lovely on the snow."

"Be sure and wrap up, darling," said Antonia Malombra. "It's terribly cold outside."

"Will the night dare to be cold," Travers inquired, "with La Venturini in it?"

But she appeared not to notice him.

"Will you wait for me in the hall while I fetch my furs?" he heard her say to Lignac. "Or do you prefer to come upstairs with me?"

"I would follow you to the ends of the world," said Lignac tritely. And his voice trembled.

A few weeks ago Travers would have been exasperated. But he felt inoculated now against Spanish grippe.

"Do you want to dance?" he asked Chiffoneta.

"There are already too many people making fools of themselves," she said, scowling darkly.

Travers sat down beside her. "Shall we discuss philosophy?"

She flushed deeply, thinking Travers was mocking her.

"What do I know about philosophy?" And she tossed her head of red curls, as though flinging him and his foolish attentions into the gay whirl of the dance.

Travers surveyed her curiously.

There was youth, vigor in her, a certain raw vivid charm that set her apart from the overly exquisite women of her world. Her generous features seemed carved in something more solid than flesh. Beside the quick, daintily poised Principessa Malombra she looked like a contadina, so free and uncontrolled were her gestures and words.

For all her superficial roughness, however, she bore the marks of her race. You had but to look at her slim, nervous ankles and wrists, her sensitive nostrils, her small ears and long restless fingers. She had beauty, too, of the wild untricked sort. Even that afternoon, at Hanselmann's, Travers had noticed how a certain suppressed fervor in her took the color out of her cousin. She had made Gloria Venturini seem like a sick, over-fragrant hothouse flower.

"You'll like St. Moritz," Travers said to her, "when you come to know it. This"—with an indefinite gesture toward this glittering, circling throng—"is but a very small part of it. I could take you to a hut high in the mountains where Segantini lived a number of years and painted his masterpieces. St. Moritz, far down in the valley, seems but a little gray pebble. There's nothing up there but free wind and snow, chain upon chain of bright dazzling ice peaks, going on forever under the sky."

Her dark sullenness melted as she listened to the young man. He felt the closeness and wistfulness of her.

"I suppose it is foolish of me," she said, scraping the polished floor with the toe of her slipper, "to mind the people. After all, they're my people; I'm more like them than I'm willing to admit. Probably I'll be married to one of them when I go home. And I'll become like them."

"Have you lived much with your cousin?" asked Travers.

"Very little. I was too young to go into society before I went to England. I spent most of my time at the villa."

"Near Rome?" Travers queried.

"No, in Tuscany, about two hours drive from Florence. It is very lovely there. We have a great *podere* with cypresses and olive trees. I was very happy. We received very little. Mother is Spanish—a terrible snob. She thinks the Italian aristocracy is rotten. I don't think it's any worse than the Spanish. People are the same everywhere. Some of them are nice—Burjos, for instance. He has real race, I think. He doesn't make the aristocracy ridiculous."

Travers glanced to where the Duke of Burjos was sitting with the Duchess of Worcester. Though the night was still in its youth, she already exhibited symptoms of inebriety. She cried shrilly and waved her short fat arms as the Duke nonchalantly tickled her neck with a straw.

"Oh, I know he amuses himself," said Cliftoneta, and she sighed a little. "I suppose all men are like that. But you never see him toadying to royalty like the others. Do you know why Gloria is in such a bad temper tonight? Because the Crown Prince has not come to the dance. She had made up her mind to fascinate him."

Later in the evening—Travers was walking up and down the hall with the Baroness Heller—he was not a little disconcerted to see Gloria Venturini come up to him. She seemed to have forgotten her insulting behavior of an hour ago.

"And how is Her Royal Highness?" she inquired of Lulu.

"She's already in bed," answered the Baroness.

"Such a charming girl! I do envy you being with her."

"She is the best friend I have."

"I hoped to see her tonight."

"The King will not allow her to go to balls with such terrible things happening at home."

"Poor kingdom!" sighed Princess Venturini, regardless that her country

was largely responsible for the King's exile.

"Yes, poor kingdom!" repeated the Baroness, with her most official solemnity.

"I wanted to ask you to join us to-night at supper. You, too, Mr. Travers."

"I shall be delighted," answered Lulu.

Champagne gave a new zest to the feast. Then the Palace orchestra relieved the weary Kulm fiddlers and dancing started afresh.

Suddenly, as he was dancing with La Venturini, Travers felt her grow heavy and listless in his arms.

"I'm tired," she murmured. "Take me somewhere quiet."

They passed into the deserted bridge room.

For a while they stood at the window, gazing over the still frozen lake at the white moonlit mountains. From the heart of the house, half smothered by distance, came the languid strains of a Viennese waltz. A rapture stole through Travers, warming his blood already stirred by champagne.

"How lovely," softly murmured La Venturini, "the moon on the snow!"

Travers shook himself free of his torpor. Ah, if she had not spoken, she might have done what she wished with him, so moved was he with the magic of the night and the hour. Did she think him a fool, like Lignac, to be won by an amorously uttered banality?

"Very pretty," he answered coolly, his masculinity exulting that he had the upper hand over her.

But she did not intend to let him elude her so easily. He felt her tremble, then voluptuously swoon against him. His mind was a blur, overwhelmed by her appeal. Then all of her seemed to melt on his lips.

He was in her power then had she but waited a little. But she must taste the fruit of her victory immediately.

"You will take me on your bob," she said softly. "You are so clever, you can invent an excuse for the Baroness Heller. You might tell her that you have received orders from your am-

bassador not to be intimate with her people."

Travers laughed softly to himself, disengaged himself from her arms. Again he felt master of himself.

"I've told you it's impossible." And he kissed her lightly, as one might kiss a petulant child.

She recoiled, stung in her flesh and pride.

"As you wish," she said coldly. "Take me back to the ball room."

He could not help admiring her as they walked through the brightly lit corridors. She showed no sign of the anger within her, chatted as though nothing had happened. But her eyes were very bright and hard.

But Travers felt in no humor for dancing. He entered the bar.

Seated in two armchairs before a little green table, Guido Venturini and Filippo Malombra were playing *écarté*.

"Have you seen Gloria?" asked Prince Venturini with a yawn. "I want to go to bed."

"The Princess is dancing," said Travers, and he ordered a whiskey.

"Turning Lignac's head, I suppose. Poor fellow!"

And, as Travers made no comment, Venturini continued:

"I don't understand what they see in her. She's all right as a wife, she's good-looking, wears her clothes well, has a certain presence. But the girl is so dull to talk to. She has not one original idea in her head. And she's an abominable bridge player. Even *your* wife is more satisfactory, Filippo."

"Antonia is not a bad girl," said Malombra. "Unfortunately she talks too much. And she has ideas."

"Yes, I know you like women to be modest and retiring. I never understood why you married Antonia."

"One should never marry the type of woman one likes," answered Malombra. "Marriage is apt to make you disgusted with it. On the other hand, if you marry the type of woman you dislike, you can retain your ideals."

Travers was amused. "Is that why you married the Princess?"

"Partly. Also I fell in love."

"You don't mean it," cried Venturini. "I never suspected it."

"Not in love with Antonia—with her sister. I was at Constantinople at the time, on a diplomatic mission. I met Antonia's sister—fell in love with her immediately. I made inquiries and was told she was engaged. I dislike competition, I'm too lazy, I suppose. At that time I received a letter from my father. He insisted that I should get married. Well, I have always been a good son. Besides my love had made me very uncomfortable, I could neither eat nor sleep, something had to be done at once. This girl had a sister, she was not engaged, so I decided to marry her. And I'm fairly happy, as well off as most married men. Antonia gives me plenty of liberty."

"Our wives are all right as long as they're occupied," said Venturini. "But I'm afraid Gloria is growing weary of Lignac."

"Did you find anything in the village?" asked Travers.

"Not a thing!" replied the Prince sourly. "Filipo tried his charms on the cobbler's daughter. She gazed at him, open mouthed, like a mountain cow. I've always said this was an uncivilized country."

CHAPTER VI

A WHITE, blinding glare rose from the snow as the King and Parmenides, followed twenty paces behind by the royal detective, walked up the narrow path which led from the Carlton to the Kulm.

"Who are we lunching with?" asked the King.

"Mr. and Mrs. Allen, Your Majesty," Parmenides replied.

"Am I acquainted with them?"

"Your Majesty met his wife last week. She told Your Majesty's fortune and prophesied Your Majesty would be seated on the throne before April."

"Oh, yes, I remember. Quite pretty, an innocent replica of her daughter."

Parmenides shook his head disapprov-

ingly. "I hear they are very common, not received by the best American society."

The King yawned. "What is that to me? I don't live in America, the land of democracy, so why should I be a snob? Besides, if he is common, he is probably weal hy."

"There's no doubt about his wealth, Your Majesty. I have made ample inquiries. He sells oil wells."

"I don't mind," returned the King, "so long as he does not smell of them. If he's as rich as you say, he should give us a good lunch."

Parmenides laughed.

"Your majesty is in a very good humor today."

"If the lunch is bad, there is no reason why we should recognize him tomorrow."

Mr. Allen, a heavy, genial, clean shaven man, stood with his wife on the steps of the Kulm awaiting the King.

"Your Majesty does us great honor," said Mrs. Allen, curtsying to the ground. She was a slight woman, sharp featured like her daughter Edna. In spite of her habitually placid behavior, the steady brilliancy of her blue eyes showed one that she might easily be moved to a pitch of hysteria.

At lunch Travers found himself seated between the Duchess of Worcester and the Princess Malombra. The former, very flustered and animated—it was evident that the ex-coryphée of the Ziegfeld "Follies" had spent the later part of the morning in the bar—was nudging her right-hand neighbor, the Duke of Burjos, who paid not the slightest attention to her, his attention being divided between his *hors d'œuvres* and the Baroness Heller.

Travers turned to La Malombra, but she had no ear for him. He caught snatches of scandalous anecdote related in an amused, incisive voice to Prince Stéphan of Montania.

"*Mon cher*, she wore the most impossible clothes. And what taste in men! Turned the head of her cook . . . always in the kitchen. The sauces were ruined. I don't mind what company a woman

keeps, but I do draw the line at being given indigestion."

Finally the Duchess of Worcester grew tired of nudging the Duke of Burjos. She addressed Travers:

"Isn't St. Moritz too lovely for words?"

Travers made some appropriate remark which was entirely disregarded.

"But the people—impossible!" In a low voice: "Who would have thought I would find myself at lunch with the Allens! Nobody receives them in New York. But I suppose it's all right if the King's here. Isn't he charming? So simple—just like one of us."

Again Travers made an appropriate remark.

"They can't even manage a lunch," continued the Duchess. "It's really too comical. My glass has been empty for the last five minutes."

And again she prodded Burjos with her elbow.

"Duke," she cried, "can't you get me something to drink? None of that terribly heavy Burgundy. Something light—some champagne."

Travers, left to his own resources, surveyed the guests.

Across the table he perceived Chifoneta, very bored between Lignac and Prince Peter, a tall, lank boy of eighteen, youngest son of the King, being affectionately mothered by Edna Allen. Travers had a moment of superior compassion for Lignac, very pale and nervous beside Gloria Venturini, who seemed utterly unaware of his presence.

"To think," said Travers to himself, "that I might be in his place," and again he congratulated himself on his escape.

Nevertheless he could not keep his eyes off her. There was a restlessness in him which she always stirred. All of her was turned toward the King, who was at the same time being fluently entertained by Mrs. Allen. Though Travers could not catch a word of their conversation through the general babble of voices, he could see that the hostess was pitting her strength against La Venturini.

The monarch ate on unconcernedly,

graciously permitting himself to be courted by two ladies. Now and then he put in a word at which his two neighbors would conspicuously brighten. Sometimes he regarded them curiously, as though inwardly debating whether it would be worth his while to stoop to warmer intimacy.

"Gloria is beautiful," he might have been saying, "a devil of a woman. On the other hand, the little American is not unattractive, and they say her husband has money."

Of a sudden Travers caught La Venturini's eyes.

For a space she calmly regarded him, curiously smiling, then he saw her turn to the King. A moment later the monarch bent over Mrs. Allen and spoke to Parmenides.

Travers felt uncomfortable. He was sure they were talking about him.

Travers looked at Mr. Allen, very flushed and blissful between the Princess Irène and her lady-in-waiting. He spoke little, but surveyed his guests with an air of proud proprietorship.

"Look what money can do," he seemed to be thinking, and he beamed on the King, at that moment whispering some piquant proposal into Mrs. Allen's ear.

"Prince Stéphan was telling me," said La Malombra to Travers, "that you are driving the same bob that won the Derby last year." And, in a low voice, while her eyes danced: "Gloria will never forgive you if you win."

"Prince Stéphan has made better time than I have," said Travers.

"That doesn't mean anything," said the Prince. "You did not have your full crew."

"Whom have you got on your bob?" asked Mrs. Richards, leaning over the Prince toward Travers.

"Baroness Heller, Parmenides, Prince Malombra, Prince Venturini . . ."

"Don't count on me," cried Guido Venturini. "I have no desire of breaking my bones. I want to be in good form for Monte Carlo next month."

"Oh, you can go to the casino in an invalid's chair," laughed La Malombra.

"I am sure, Guido dear, that it would be very effective."

"Do you know how many bobs will be running?" asked Prince Stéphan.

"Five, I think," answered Travers. "Yours, the Duke of Burjos, a Swiss crew from the Suvretta-Haus, a bob from Davos, and finally my bob."

"What about the Peruvian bob?" asked Mrs. Richards.

"Oh, I forgot. But I don't think they're very dangerous. They upset twice yesterday before Sunny Corner."

There was a general din of scraping chairs. Everybody rose from the table.

"Damn!" muttered the Duchess of Worcester. "I wanted another Char treuse."

Outside in the hall Travers met the Baroness Heller.

"You had better keep away from the King," she whispered excitedly. "He is very angry with you."

"Angry with me!" Travers exclaimed. "Why? I don't understand."

"I can't tell you now. The Princess is waiting for me."

"What a bore! I wanted to take you for a sleigh ride."

"Impossible! But tomorrow I'm free. The Court is going for an excursion. I have the whole day to myself."

Travers brightened. "Shall we go skijoring to Maloya?"

"That will be lovely. But don't come to the Carlton for me. I'll meet you at the Suvretta-Haus—at eleven. There's trouble. I'll explain tomorrow."

Later in the afternoon Travers was helping Chiffoneta with her outside edge on the Palace rink. It amused him to watch her delight as he swung her around the curves. She seemed very different from the sullen girl of a few days ago.

Suddenly she said to him: "Be careful of Gloria. She hates you. She's trying to make trouble."

Immediately Travers remembered what Lulu had told him. La Venturini had been up to mischief, somehow she had managed to turn the King against him. But though he questioned her, he could learn nothing from Chiffoneta.

Nor could he glean anything from La Venturini that night at the Palace cotillion. She made no advances toward him, yet her attitude was unusually natural and friendly.

"By the way," she said to him as he bade her good night, "I'm racing in the Derby after all."

"I'm so glad," Travers replied. "Is the Duke of Burjos taking you down?"

"No. I'm going in Serge Tamaroff's bob. He won the race at Davos and will be here tomorrow. He writes that he is sure to win. But I would much rather have gone with you."

And Travers could not help admiring her. She was pouting like a disappointed schoolgirl.

CHAPTER VII

CLOUDS hung like gray woolen shrouds over the mountains when Lulu met Travers at the Suvretta-Haus.

"I hope you don't mind being caught in a snowstorm," said Travers.

The little Baroness laughed merrily.

"I don't mind anything. It's so wonderful to have a whole day to myself."

They put on their skis and drawn by a vigorous bay horse started down the road toward Campfer. Gradually the slope increased. They were gaining on the horse.

"Break!" Travers cried.

But all Lulu could do was to lurch hysterically against him. For a moment they swerved precariously, now driven up the steep snow banks which bordered the road, now tangling their skis in the deep icy ruts. Though Travers lashed the horse into a gallop, they were drawing closer and closer to the animal's hoofs. Great clots of hard snow were thrown up in their faces.

"Let go!" cried Travers.

The next instant found them flung headlong into a snowdrift.

They disentangled their skis, shook the snow from them. About half a mile ahead they saw their horse complacently trotting into the village of Campfer.

A massive bearded guide was waiting with the horse in the little village square.

He regarded Lulu and Travers with that puzzled, half-patronizing expression that the natives have for the pleasure-seekers of St. Moritz.

They sped on without further misadventure, now swiftly galloping, now lapsing into a trot, along the white length of road which rises gently, skirting the shores of three lakes, through the Upper Engadine Valley.

"Tell me," said Travers to the baroness, as they left behind them the little pointed church of Silvaplana, "why is His Majesty annoyed with me?"

"It's La Venturini's fault. I hate that woman."

Travers could not help smiling. There was not a woman in St. Moritz who did not dislike Princess Venturini.

"I can't imagine what she told the King."

"She told him that you were against his reinstatement on the throne. She also insinuated that you were in the secret service."

"But it's ridiculous!" Travers exclaimed. "I'm here on a vacation, not on a mission."

"I don't care about your political opinions. I like you, I don't ask any questions. But you see, in my official position . . ."

"But I assure you . . ."

"Oh, don't trouble to explain. I'm tired of politics. They spoil everything—even St. Moritz. I've been ordered not to speak to you. And I did want to go on your bob."

"Do you mean," cried Travers, "that you can't race in the Derby with me?"

"What can I do? Don't you understand my position?"

"That woman is a devil," said Travers ruefully. "She's furious because I refused to take her on my bob?"

"Oh, now I understand," said Lulu with a quick flare of anger. "You are in love with her. You have been playing me off against her."

"You're entirely mistaken," cried Travers, so distressed that he all but lost his balance. "I dislike her more than you do. One reason why I came to St. Moritz was to escape her."

For a while she regarded him dubiously. Then, reassured by his frank, troubled face:

"Forgive me. She's loathsome. I don't know what the men see in her. Why she even upset His Majesty yesterday. And surely he takes his adventures lightly enough."

They skijored without further conversation to Maloya. They had lunch at a small mountain inn, where they warmed themselves with the fair Valtelline wine. Then they skiid to the summit of the pass, gazed over the brink of the precipice at the winding Breaglia valley.

"In two hours," said Travers, "we could be in Italy."

Lulu shuddered: "There's too much of Italy for my taste at the Palace Hotel."

"That's only the gilded ruffraff of Rome," said Travers. "The cream of the cream. Why not go farther south, meet the spring in Sicily?"

"It would be very lovely," she said.

Suddenly he caught the little Baroness to him. "Then come with me. Why should we ever return to St. Moritz?"

"What about our careers?"

But Travers was launched in the full current of his idea. "Isn't life, happiness, more important than any career?"

"Don't tempt me," she implored, caught by his enthusiasm.

"Why not?"

"Because I'm accustomed to yield to temptation. It hurts me when I resist."

"Then why resist?"

She did not answer him.

He watched her eyes, dilated and very tender, there was no hint of the gentle merriment which he had seen playing in them even in her warmest moods. Her lips parted, the lines on her forehead appeared to deepen a little, she seemed thoughtful, troubled and grave.

And suddenly, as Travers continued to watch her, a cold fear ran in him. Suppose she were to take his offer seriously. Suppose she were willing to give up her position. She was very charming, prettily fashioned, amusing, but he knew nothing about her. Her presence

often stirred a warmth in him, but he never missed her when she was away. He did not want her. What would he do with her in his life?

Perhaps, if he had made a movement to take her, he might at that instant have had her. But he did not move, he let the moment pass. And gradually she regained her composure.

She fretfully played with the snow, kicked a patch of the white fluffy stuff over the precipice.

"Let's not spoil the day by being serious," she cried. And, sighing a little: "Who knows? We may not have another."

It was snowing heavily by the time they reached Silvaplana. Then darkness fell.

As they sped along the road, Travers could see nothing but the dark shadow of the horse ahead of them, and beside him the less distinct shadow of Lulu.

Her voice came thoughtfully through the night:

"You should have told me about La Venturini. I could have gone on the Duke's bob."

"I don't understand," said Travers.

"I have so many enemies. I can't afford to make one of La Venturini. She has too much influence."

A gust of anger swept through Travers. It hurt him that she should think merely of her security.

She seemed to sense his unspoken reproach.

"If you knew how difficult it is to live at the court. They are all against me, except the Princess, because I'm not one of their people. It's a perpetual round of scandal, intrigue, and conspiracy. Sometimes I feel I would do anything for peace."

"I suggested a remedy," said Travers curtly.

"I am not the woman for you," she said softly. "I want peace but there are other things, too. I'm restless. I hate all these intrigues, yet they have become necessary to me. I would make you wild."

Travers did not answer her. Though her sadness warmed him toward her, at

the same time he felt irritated. He could find nothing to say.

Suddenly, from the breast of the night, a great glare burst upon them. The falling flakes of snow glittered like numberless dancing confetti. They were in front of the Suvretta-Haus.

"It has been very lovely," she said to him as he removed her skis. "I'm sorry I'm so unsatisfactory. Don't come in with me. There may be some of our people at the Hotel."

And she vanished through the bright swinging doors.

CHAPTER VIII

TRAVERS asked Chiffoneta to take Lulu's place on his bob. She accepted immediately, with no show of coquetry. And Travers was very grateful to her. He was not accustomed to such simple, spontaneous behavior on the part of the St. Moritzers.

"I know it's very rude of me," he said to her, "to ask you at the last moment."

"Gloria has been horrid," she replied. And her gray eyes blazed.

La Venturini took the news with a shrug of amusement. It did not occur to her to be jealous of her cousin. Chiffoneta was too much of a child to be reckoned a rival.

"I call it disgusting," said Gloria to Travers, "the way those people treat you. One day they're agreeable, the next day they have no use for you. If it were not for Guido—he's a terrible snob—I would wash my hands of the court."

Travers thanked her for her sympathy. He could not but admire her smooth, brazen manner of playing her part.

A heavy fall of snow prevented any practice on the bob run. Then the weather cleared, but for two days the course was impracticable.

Travers took advantage of the fresh snow to take Chiffoneta for a long skiing excursion. They started early in the morning, took a train to Bernina-Haus, climbed the snowfields that led to the Diavolezza hut. They descended by

way of the Morteratsch glacier, a great stream of ice that winds through the heart of the Bernina range.

It was an ideal January day—not a breath of wind stirred the crisp, sun-washed air. The scandals and intrigues of St. Moritz seemed very remote and trivial as they skiid at an altitude of ten thousand feet at the foot of the great snow peaks. And it was a relief to Travers to talk freely to a girl against whom he did not have to be every instant on his guard.

The next day bobbing started on the run. It was soon evident that but three of the seven bobs were likely to win the race. Tamaroff, with his crew from Davos, was the favorite, then in close order followed Travers and Prince Stéphan of Montania. The young attaché had little fear of the Prince of Montania, who, though he had broken the record, performing the journey in ninety seconds, had frequently upset in the course of his experiments. Travers thought it unlikely that his bob would prove sufficiently steady to come out first in the Derby, a three-days' race consisting of nine journeys down the run.

Travers' intimacy with the Baroness Lulu hardly progressed during this week. She had found a place on "Helvetia," a bob with a Swiss crew from the Suvretta-Haus, but she hardly dared talk to him as the King and his court had fallen into the habit of watching the trials.

One morning he ran across her at Hanselmann's.

"I wish I hadn't gone in for the race," she said. "These Swiss are so dull. They shouldn't be allowed in Switzerland."

"They're a steady crew," said Travers. "They never upset. I shouldn't be surprised if you won."

Lulu shook her head. "They are too terribly prudent. They put on the brakes before each curve."

"I thought you were a partisan of prudence," said Travers, rather pointedly.

"You shouldn't say that!" she an-

swered, and her eyes flashed. "Who put on the brakes at Maloya?"

On the other hand, if he gradually drifted away from Lulu, Travers' friendship with Chiffoneta ripened during these days. Often, at the end of a run, they would walk up from Celerina instead of driving up by sleigh. They were usually alone, for Venturini and Malombra showed little inclination for exercise, deeming that they paid sufficient homage to the outlandish custom of sports by trusting themselves to Travers.

Travers suffered considerable annoyance from Gloria Venturini during this week. She seldom departed from her attitude of scornful amusement whenever she met him with Chiffoneta. She had a way of looking at him that made him feel like an awkward, overgrown college boy playing games with an immature schoolgirl.

Very often, too, she would assume over him an air of proprietorship. He repeatedly found himself used as a foil to Tamaroff, and this annoyed Travers intensely, as he felt no animosity toward the great Slav. On the contrary, there was a certain rough sweetness and simplicity behind the man's outward brutality which rather appealed to Travers. Further, Travers was grateful to him for taking the Princess off his hands.

One evening in the Palace, while she was sitting with Serge Tamaroff in the hall, La Venturini called Travers to her table.

"Amuse me, Maurice," she said carelessly. "Serge is so stupid tonight."

A dark flush spread over Tamaroff's features. And Travers also blushed. It annoyed him to be forced into a situation.

La Venturini was so pleased with the success of her manoeuvre that she repeated it on the following night. A moonlight excursion to Sils Maria had been planned by the Italians. At the last moment she contrived to start a quarrel with Tamaroff and insisted that Travers should come into her sleigh.

"Isn't the moon lovely tonight?" she murmured dreamily as they slid through the bright frosty land.

Travers' blood was up. Hitherto he had sought to evade her, to efface himself when circumstances threw him in her presence. He was so angry now that he resolved to fight her with her own weapons.

He played to her mood. He sought her hand under the rugs, drew her possessively to him. She closed her eyes beneath his lips, quivering as though in a torment of the fondest pain. And Travers laughed within him. She might have been a mannikin, so little she moved him.

Travers managed to lose her during the dance at Sils. His conduct through the evening was calculated to annoy her. He spent the entire time with Princess Malombra. And Antonia, ever ready to do her friend an ill turn, met his advances more than half way. Nor did she oppose his desire when Travers besought to be allowed to accompany her home in her sleigh.

But Gloria was fully equal to the occasion.

"I'm so glad you get on so well with Antonia," she said as the young attaché bent formally over her hand to wish her good night. "She is such a dear friend of mine."

But Travers knew, by her casual, almost impersonal smile, that she was ready to do him damage at the first convenient opportunity.

CHAPTER IX

Two days before the race the bobs were sold at auction in the Assyrian lounge of the Kulm. The proceeds of the pool were to be divided between the buyer and driver of the winning bob.

A great crowd had gathered for the event.

"Who are they?" Travers had inquired of the round, pompous Hotel manager.

Herr Blum, who prided himself on being acquainted with only the best people, shrugged his little sleek shoulders.

"How should I know?" he said. "All Zurich—I suppose, all the Bahnhof-Strasse. They're up for the races."

It was indeed a motley, cosmopolitan assemblage. Heavy Swiss burghers with their stiff, wooden-faced spouses. Swiss officers, full chested, very self-conscious, grotesquely imitating the Prussian rigidity of carriage. Thin, yellow South Americans, Chilians, Peruvians, Argentines, surrounded by their buxom, sharp-voiced, overdressed women folk. Dark, smooth, oily Greeks; *rastaquouères* from Cairo, Budapest and Vienna. Students from the Universities of Lausanne and Zurich, their thin faces tanned mahogany by long exposure in the snow. Demi-mondaines from Geneva and Lausanne, singularly ingenuous in appearance with their rough paint and flamboyant apparel contrasted to the Princesses of Russia and Italy. Swiss bankers from Lugano who looked like Italians; dark, gesticulating Italians talking loudly in French and wearing the latest Bond Street styles. Bland, clean-shaven Britishers with their thin, tired, eager wives and tittering, pink-complexioned daughters. Second-rate long-haired musicians from Paris, Buda-Pest and Warsaw. A number of grave, dark, spectacled Persians, forming a circle around a tub of a man with flat, flabby hands, evidently a high dignitary of their country. Heiresses from the United States of America with their portly, intriguing, shortsighted mammas, beset by what Europe has to offer of most suspicious and bric-a-brac in the line of titled, honey-tongued adventurers.

They mingled and parted, formed into groups, laughing, gesticulating, talking in their many tongues. Like a horde of provincials they stared, open-mouthed, at the charmed circle of St. Moritzers. They streamed into the white room where sat the King surrounded by courtiers and toadies. La Venturini excited considerable comment from the Swiss and English women because of her nonchalant behavior and the daring cut of her gown.

A gong sounding in the Assyrian hall called the crowd to some degree of order.

The first bob to be sold was "Pst," which was to be driven by Pombo Oli-

vagoya, a thin, yellow-faced South American. Despite its luckless career in the trial races—it had upset no less than nine times—a Peruvian banker bought it for sixteen hundred francs.

"Pombo will be so glad," said Edna to Travers. "Poor boy! He's been drinking so heavily since I broke my engagement."

"Helvetia," the Swiss bob from the Suvretta-Haus, fetched eighteen hundred; "Gallito," christened after a famous toreador, then the idol of Spain, was bought by its driver, the Duke of Burjos, for about the same price. The real interest started, however, when "Crème de Menthe," Prince Stéphan's bob, was put on the market.

The Prince—it was common knowledge that he possessed not a farthing beyond what was allowed him by Mrs. Richards, his prospective bride, opened the bidding with fifteen hundred francs.

"Two thousand!" cried Mr. Allen.

Mrs. Richards nudged the Prince, whispered something in his ear.

"Three thousand!" he shouted.

But Mr. Allen was determined. The King had lunched at his table, his wife's charms had been appreciated by the youngest sons of two of the crowned heads of Europe, he considered he had a reputation to sustain.

"Four thousand!" he cried.

The duel continued. Five thousand, six thousand were bid.

At that moment Travers noticed Achilopollo, aide-de-camp to the Prince, talking in an undertone to Mr. Allen. The millionaire nodded, and stopped bidding. Evidently he had been told that His Royal Highness, Prince Stéphan of Montania, would take it in bad part if he were opposed any further.

Travers' bob was the next on the list. "Three hundred francs!" shouted Tamaroff.

There was a general rumor of laughter.

Travers glanced toward the group of Italians: La Venturini was smiling. Evidently she was responsible for the Russian's ridiculous bid. Finally Mr. Allen bought the bob for fifteen hundred, an

absurdly low price considering its excellent chances of winning the Derby.

The last bob to be auctioned was Tamaroff's.

"Eleven francs sixty," shouted Travers.

"Six thousand!" shouted the Slav in a thundering voice.

No one bid against him.

CHAPTER X

THE Derby was run under ideal conditions. The course had never been swifter, not a cloud hovered in the brilliant Engadine sky.

By the close of the second day all but three bobs had been to all purposes eliminated from the contest. Tamaroff led over Travers by a margin of eight seconds. "Helvetia," on which Lulu was riding, was nearly a full minute behind Travers. Prince Stéphan, after having broken the record on the first day, had come to grief on his fourth trip, having upset at Sunny Corner with serious damage to himself and two members of his crew.

"Do you think we have any chance?" asked Chiffoneta, as they walked up from Celerina after one of the second day races.

"Of course," Travers replied. "We're only a few seconds behind Tamaroff."

For a while they walked on in silence through the tall snow-covered pines, often moving to the side of the road to make way for the traffic of sleighs behind which trailed the bobs with their gay-colored crews.

Chiffoneta stretched her arms, clasped them close behind her, as though to draw to her all the white fairy magic of the wild mountain land.

"St. Moritz has spoiled me," she said, "I wonder if I'll ever be so happy again."

"Do you remember how you used to dislike it? I'll never forget what a sulky, bad-tempered child I thought you when I first met you at Hanselmann's."

"I still hate most of the people—if I stop to think about them."

"They're amusing," said Travers, "if

one does not take them too seriously. They're pretty as patches of nonsense and color. It's like being in a perpetual carnival."

"They throw ugly confetti," said Chiffoneta.

A skier slid from the woods, barely retaining his equilibrium as he fell from the soft snow to the swift icy road.

Chiffoneta sighed. "To think that in four weeks I'll have to go back to the world—back to mud and cities and streets."

A poignant sadness gripped Travers.

"My leave expires on the first of February," he said.

"And who will take me bobbing and skiing?" she inquired disconsolately.

"You'll find somebody else."

"You shouldn't say that," she said reproachfully. "You know it won't be the same."

Travers made no reply. He knew very well that it wouldn't be the same, neither for him nor for her.

Gradually, almost imperceptibly, a great tenderness for her had crept into his being. He knew now she was necessary to him.

He shuddered as he visualized life at the embassy with its humdrum, empty, official routine.

"I'll see you in Rome," he hazarded.

"It will be very different. People are so stupid, they won't let us be alone together. And I suppose they will want me to get married."

Travers passed his hand through her arm, closed his fingers on the fresh pulsing skin of her wrist. A soft warmth enveloped him, a gentle, almost protective, passion. He wanted to look at her but her head was turned away; he could but glimpse her profile, dark and grave against the white snow. He might have taken her to him, compelled her to confess the tenderness which he felt swelling in her, had not a confusion of voices, the tinkle of sleigh bells brought him very brusquely to earth.

"How delightful!" cried La Venturini, leaning out of her sleigh. "Hansel and Gretel. The Babes in the Wood."

Travers blushed. A certain awkward-

ness seized him. It was as though he had been caught in guilt. His hand fell from Chiffoneta's arm, nor did she make any movement to retain it. A spell had been broken, something vital that held them together seemed suddenly to have been cut. They spoke little as they walked up to the start, they were unable to recover their mood. And Travers had the illusion that he knew nothing about her, so far away did she seem to have gone. She had become a stranger, something disconnected, a person whom he could not touch.

Next afternoon, at two o'clock, the race started anew.

Travers was fully determined, if he could not win the Derby, to break Prince Stéphan's record of eighty-nine seconds.

He had a fair start, gathered speed as he rounded the first couple of curves. The bob seemed a live animal beneath him, as living as the human cargo behind him. The hard sting of the icy air against Travers' cheek convinced him that he was exceeding his normal rate of progress, an impression confirmed as he took Sunny Corner by the wild almost frightened cries of the crowd gathered to watch the race. Then followed a quarter mile of comparatively straight course, then the acute Horseshoe Curve.

The real difficulties began, however, as they shot down through the woods: Travers needed all his skill to keep the bob from rising too high on the icy sides of the curves. Then a precipitous dip into space before the sensational Bridge Turn.

Travers took the bend a trifle too high; for an instant the bob sped on one runner, a catastrophe seemed inevitable. He heard a wild cry proceeding from the panic-stricken Prince Venturini, felt an increased pressure of Chiffoneta's arms about him. But the bob righted itself, and they rushed on past the finish, rising so high up the slope that Travers knew immediately that he had made the swiftest passage of his bobbing career. The crew scrambled off the bob, shook their cramped wind-beaten bodies.

"Eighty-seven and four-fifths seconds," cried the controller.

Travers had broken Prince Stéphan's record.

Fully ten minutes elapsed before Tamaroff's bob appeared around the bend of Bridge Turn. It was immediately evident that something radical was amiss; the bob was swaying precariously, and had lost all but two of its crew.

"Five-minutes and twenty-two seconds," cried the controller.

"Something's wrong with my steering gear," growled Tamaroff, as he lifted his great body from the bob. "We upset twice, at Sunny and at Horseshoe."

"I knew Serge would make a mess of it," said Gloria. "He was too keen on breaking your record, Mr. Travers. We had a good margin, we should have played for safety."

"Where's your crew?" asked Travers. "Is anyone hurt?"

"I don't know," said La Venturini, with a shrug. "We left them at Horseshoe. I think there's only a leg broken. My congratulations, Mr. Travers."

"I've not won yet," said Travers. "'Helvetia' is but a minute or so behind me. The course is very swift. Anything may happen in the last two races."

Despite his good fortune Travers was not in the merriest of moods as he sleighed up to the start with Chiffoneta. A constraint still existed between them. She seemed to hold something against him.

He felt very nervous as he started down the course. From the first everything seemed to go wrong, he felt that he had no control over his bob. He took Sunny Corner too high, all but overturned at the Horseshoe, took the Bridge Turn at such a vertical angle that he split Venturini and Malombra. He put on his brakes, the crew scrambled on, but a precious minute had been lost. 'Helvetia' was now three seconds in the lead.

"Are you too tired to walk up?" he asked Chiffoneta.

"No," she said. "It will do me good. It will relieve the tension."

They walked up the hill slowly, Travers seeking for an opening to break the strained atmosphere between himself and Chiffoneta.

"Are you angry with me?" he asked brusquely.

She flushed deeply. "No," she answered, "why should I be angry?"

"Then . . . what's the matter?"

"I thought you were angry with me."

"Then you don't dislike me?"

She broke into fond, happy laughter.

Travers felt the tension within him melting, dissolving. A wild joy rushed through him.

"I thought you blamed me," Chiffoneta explained, "because Gloria laughed at us yesterday."

"I thought you blamed me," answered Travers.

They leaped into a passing sleigh and drove to the start.

"We'll win easily," said Travers confidently. "'Helvetia' can't do less than ninety seconds."

It was not without considerable persuasion that Prince Venturini was induced to trust himself to Travers for the final race.

"If I come back alive," he said, gingerly seating himself on the bob, "I'll be faithful to Gloria till the end of my life."

"Lucky she can't hear you," said Travers.

"Bah!" laughed the Prince. "She wouldn't hold me to it. What would the poor woman do with a faithful husband on her hands?"

Travers nearly equaled his record on his final trip down the bob run. He won the Derby over "Helvetia" by three seconds.

CHAPTER XI

It was dark and snowing heavily when Travers entered the sleigh which was to take him and his seconds to the Statzer See. He yawned, shivered from cold in the raw morning air, cursed Tamaroff heartily. What a fool the man was to play into the hands of La Venturini!

He was too drowsy, too angry to be

nervous. Further, like most Americans, he had a superior contempt for dueling.

The more he considered the causes which had driven him out of bed at four in the morning, the more childish and absurd they appeared to him. It was all the outcome of a scene in the Palace bar, the night of his Derby victory. La Venturini, angered at her defeat, had laid all the blame on Tamaroff. The Slav had made no attempt to justify himself, but his humor had grown blacker from hour to hour. Nor had a dozen whiskeys and vodkas improved his temper.

Gloria was still tormenting Tamaroff when they entered the bar. When she caught sight of Travers, she had to tell him the story all over again. Had not Serge been a fool to attempt to break Travers' record when he led by a margin of eight seconds?

Frantic at her inability to goad Tamaroff into an explosion, she suddenly altered her tactics. She sat down beside him, apologized for her behavior, settled to win him by blandishment. Though Travers heard not a word she was saying, a number of threatening glances thrown by Tamaroff convinced him that Gloria was talking about him.

Suddenly Tamaroff—he was very drunk now—rose unsteadily from his table, lurched over to Travers. Then the great Slav's fist crashed into the young attaché's face.

"That's what you get," growled Tamaroff, "for meddling with my steering gear."

Travers, stunned by the blow, swung blindly at Tamaroff. But before he could touch him, a shouting, gesticulating crowd interposed itself between the two combatants.

La Venturini surveyed the Russian disdainfully.

"Fool!" she cried, her lip curling. "Imagine a sportsman like Mr. Travers tampering with your bob!"

Travers trembled with rage. There was an undertone of insult in her voice that stung him more deeply than Tamaroff's fist.

On his part Tamaroff was too staggered to be able to utter a word. He could do nothing but stare drunkenly at La Venturini.

"I suppose you'll be saying that I put you up to this," she continued with the same smooth contempt.

Then, to Travers, very solicitously:

"I hope you won't be foolish enough to fight him, Maurice."

Travers found himself beset by a number of gentlemen desirous of acting as his seconds. Though he had no inclination to fight—a duel seemed to him ridiculous, besides it might prejudice his career—it soon became evident that no other course was open to him. So he accepted the services of Prince Malombra and a young American journalist.

For a couple of days the matter hung in suspense. The four seconds deliberated in the bar, consumed innumerable sandwiches and highballs which, according to immemorial custom, were duly inscribed on Travers' and Tamaroff's accounts.

Finally, as neither of the two antagonists was willing to proffer excuses, it was decided that they should meet at the Statzer See, at daybreak, on the morning of the twenty-ninth of January. They were to exchange three pistol shots at forty metres.

Though he had shouted repeatedly that he would riddle Travers with bullets, rid the world of the scum of him, Tamaroff was hardly of a jubilant temper as he drove up to the duelling ground. A thorough examination of his bob had soon convinced him of the falseness of his accusations. A simple and sweet tempered man behind his uncouth exterior, his resentment fell when he discovered that he had been made a fool of by Gloria.

He could not, however, bring himself to sign the written apologies which Travers' seconds laid before him. Another suggestion of Travers, a rough and tumble fight in the snow, appeared beneath his dignity. But he had an effective remedy when his conscience trou-

bled him. He opened a fresh bottle of vodka.

A wan, gray dawn was breaking when Travers got out of his sleigh. It was still snowing heavily.

"Why not make it twenty metres," said Travers. "I can't see through this snow."

Prince Malombra laughed. "Evidently, *caro mio*, you are ignorant of the most elementary laws of duelling. We would have to consult for two days before changing our decision."

"I can't afford it," said Travers, "with such thirsty seconds."

Tamaroff's sleigh appeared over the brow of the hill. The seconds deliberated, measured the land. Then Malombra came over to Travers.

"You'll have no trouble in killing him. The man is too drunk to see."

But Travers was determined not to touch Tamaroff. When the signal was given, he fired three times in the air. Then he heard, far to the right of him, the whistle of Tamaroff's bullets.

A voice cried: "Is your honor satisfied?"

"It is," answered Travers impatiently. It seemed absurd to have been disturbed for so trivial an incident.

"Is your honor satisfied?" Malombra shouted to Tamaroff.

Travers saw a huge dark form ploughing through the deep snow toward him. Then he felt himself being embraced effusively on both cheeks.

"Duels always make me thirsty," cried Tamaroff. "Let's have a drink."

Travers was too amused to retain his bad humor. He followed the Russian to the Statzer See inn.

"What fools we are!" said Tamaroff. "That woman should be spanked."

"So I've told Guido repeatedly," said Prince Malombra. "He should give up his milkmaids for a couple of weeks and look after his wife."

It was fully an hour before Tamaroff could be induced to leave the Statzer See. He insisted, too, on returning by way of Pontresina and Celerina.

"They'll be anxious at the hotel," ventured Travers, as they lingered unduly

S. S.—July—3

over their wine at a roadside tavern.

"Bah!" returned Serge, hugging Travers affectionately. "One does not fight a duel every day. Besides, it will give them something to talk about."

It was a gay-spirited party that entered St. Moritz in the late afternoon. Even the bored Prince Malombra seemed exhilarated. "I hope that woman will have the good taste to keep to her room for a couple of days," said Tamaroff, as the sleighs drew up before the Palace.

But she was waiting for them in the lounge.

"I have nearly died of anxiety," she said, stretching forth both her hands. "Promise me, both of you, never to quarrel again."

Tamaroff grunted something inarticulate.

Then, turning to Travers: "Come along! I'm off to the bar."

But Travers did not follow the Russian. In a dark corner of the hall, he had seen a vague swaying figure. A great warmth pervaded him as he recognized Chiffoneta.

"You see, I'm back safe," he said to her.

She did not answer him. She stood before him, trembling.

"You were afraid I would be hurt?"

She nodded her head slowly, still unable to speak. And Travers caught her to him, kissed her warm, moist eyes.

Suddenly, shaking a little, she drew herself away.

"What's the matter?" asked Travers.

"Nothing," she returned plaintively, laughing through her tears. "I can't find my handkerchief."

CHAPTER XII

THE storm which had begun on the morning of the duel lasted three days. The heavy fall of snow rendered even skiing precarious, so the St. Moritzers were confined to their hotels. And as there was nothing to talk about save an avalanche which had destroyed a venturesome party of Swiss skiers, the en-

gagement of Travers and Chiffoneta excited considerable comment.

The Baroness Heller was the first to congratulate Travers.

"Suppose I were to remind you of your offer to take me to Italy," she said, her eyes brightening with gentle malice.

Travers laughed somewhat nervously.

She regarded him fondly, almost protectively.

"Don't worry," she said, shrugging a little. "The next time we meet it may be on more equal terms. You shall be married. I shall be free—I expect my divorce from the court." Then, with a hint of sadness. "You have been very good to me. I shall not forget it easily."

La Venturini had also her word to say.

"I'm so glad!" she murmured. "Chiffoneta is such a sweet girl."

Then, significantly: "I know how capable of affection you are, Mr. Travers."

Travers smiled. He was in too happy a mood to take up her challenge.

"Of course her family want her to

marry an Italian," Gloria continued. "But then, you have money. I promise to do my best to persuade my aunt. She can't refuse me anything."

Travers thanked her, though he doubted whether her services would prove of assistance to him.

"But are you not afraid?" she pursued.

"Afraid of what?" asked Travers.

She regarded him with a soft defiance.

"You will be in the family. I shall see you very often. Are you not afraid of a relapse of *grippe espagnole*?"

"I am sure," answered Travers, smiling into her eyes, "that Chiffoneta will prove an admirable nurse."

"We'll hope for the best," returned Gloria. "But I wish for your sake she were more experienced."

"I'll have trouble with her again," said Travers to Chiffoneta that night in the Palace.

"I don't think so," said Chiffoneta, her eyes suddenly hardening. "I think I can manage her, dear."

(Finis)



Tune

By Ward Twichell

I ASK, who once half won you—
What is your beauty now?
And has the world undone you,
And did you care how—

And are you old and dying,
Or are you young and dead—
And what was it set sighing
This tune in my head?



The Elegant Mr. Gason

By Carlotta Greet

I
MAUD and Rita had come back from London. They hadn't been in the house an hour before the neighbors began to troop in.

"I should think they could let your parents have you for a *little* while—" Mrs. Bowen protested to Maud as she and Mr. Bowen were gradually pushed to the wall.

"Did you see the Royal Family?" the intruders were demanding, and "Isn't it *dreadful* to be back where you can't get anything to drink—at least not without breaking a leg—" and "Are Englishmen *really* so handsome?"

"Rather—" Rita was replying in a sleepy, rich English voice that made Mr. Bowen nudge his wife triumphantly.

"She's picked that up pretty neat—hasn't she?"

Mrs. Bowen smiled back, but she felt guilty. She was not thinking of Rita's imitation English—but of another voice—the real thing—that she had heard thirty years ago. It hadn't seemed that long until Rita told the story. If only she wouldn't repeat it now! But Rita never could resist a good story. She had come out with it as they drove away from the station. "You'll never guess who we saw in London, Mother! It's too good to be true—*Mr. Gason!*"

"What?" Papa had thundered. "Not Mama's old beau?"

"Oh, no—but a son of his. He was simply a scream—"

"Simply dreadful," Maud interrupted. "We always thought of *your* Mr. Gason as grand, but *this* one—"

"Yes, really, Mother—" Rita had continued, carrying the narrative to a hilarious end.

Mrs. Bowen had listened, her eyes kind and full of quiet amusement. For thirty years she had cultivated that wise, amused smile at the mention of that name.

Now she brushed past Papa's plump knees and wedging between the sprawling Teddy Mayhew and the Morrell girl, edged toward the door.

"Tea," she explained in a whisper in response to Maud's raised eyebrows. "I'll get Ella started with the tea—or would you rather have lemonade?"

"Heavens—no." Maud's voice was shocked. "Tea, of course."

Mrs. Bowen nodded obediently. Yes, tea, of course. Tea was English. She hadn't forgotten.

II

In the kitchen it was quiet and orderly. Ella was orderly, too, as she sliced thin bread and ladled tea into the silver pot. Mrs. Bowen knew that Ella did not need her help, but she dreaded the living-room with its chatter. At any moment Rita might begin the story of John Gason's son.

For thirty years she had heard nothing of John Gason. It seemed strange that when news came at last it should be like this. It wasn't so strange that her daughters had met this son—marvelous coincidents were always happening in life—but coming up from the station she had listened to her husband's and her daughters' laughter at Rita's story—had heard her own light laughter—and it had seemed suddenly curious and awful that these people who should be closest to her knew nothing of the only real moments of her life.

She wondered if all people lived one thing and dreamed another. When she was a girl she had been taught you loved but one man and that man you married. Your children, your home, your love for your husband filled your days. And it wasn't that these things had not satisfied her. She had been happy and content. It was only that her life came from a deeper source than these—from a hidden, secret thing—from the love she had had for John Gason.

She had never tried to hide John Gason—only his meaning. When the children were small, their fumbling fingers had lighted upon the prettiest books on the lower shelves. "Where'd these come from, Mama?"

And she had opened a fly leaf carelessly as if searching for the donor's name and had answered, smiling—always smiling—"Oh, that was a present from John Gason!" They had unearthed the Japanese box, too, and were pawing among its contents when she had come upon them.

"Where'd all these come from, Mama?" they wondered—and "Why don't you ever wear these pretty things?" Her old carved beads had dangled from their plump necks and they had thrust their fat little hands into the soft, scented gloves—"Don't!" she had called out so sharply that they had stared up at her with sudden, startled eyes.

When they were older they began to ask questions.

"Who was this John Gason, Mama?" Rita began one day.

As she had stood smiling, her head a little to one side, trying to think of an answer, Fred had pushed down the top of his paper and was grinning slyly at them.

"I'll tell you, Puss," he volunteered to Rita, looking not at her, but at his wife. "He was one of Mama's old beaux. She was a great girl—your mother. Had a raft of fellows. But this Gason chap—gosh, Emma, he must have been one of these sick highbrows. Don't see how you ever stood for him."

"Well, I didn't," she had answered

smartly, smiling—"didn't I marry you?" And Fred had given a gratified grin and retired behind the paper again.

She had known then that her answer was a lie and she had wanted to cry out and tell them all—especially Fred—the truth. She had wanted them to know that she had loved John Gason more than anything in her life—that she had waited and waited for him to come back again. But he had never come.

Instead, after eight years, there had been Fred—good, solid, dependable Fred. Fred, who loved her, too. She had never regretted marrying Fred, but when she sat listening to music or lingered in the summer dark of the veranda hearing the slow steps of the young lovers strolling past, it wasn't Fred or knowledge begotten of Fred that made her eyes suddenly soft and shining—

III

JOHN GASON had never called her Emma.

"What a name for a girl like you!" he had laughed. "Emma is a scrub girl name—and you—O Bluma!—you're a flower—O Bluma!"

But that had been much later, almost at the end.

At first they had been shy. He had come to the telegraph office where she worked to send a cable to England—not many girls worked at things like that then—it wasn't like now—and they had talked. He was carrying a book and he had not thought it strange that she sat reading in leisure moments instead of making "fancy work" as the other girls did.

That evening as she came from the office, he "happened" to be passing by and they had walked together to her boarding-house and stood outside while she told him about Mr. Perkins with the funny whiskers and Miss Simms, who always wore red beads with a blue dress or white beads with a gray, and Mrs. Caldwell, who never let them forget that she was a widow and alone in the world. They had laughed and laughed,

standing there on the pavement in the spring dusk, their hats off—the wind beginning to rumple their hair. Then suddenly they had stopped, looking at each other, excited and curious, wondering what they had been laughing about. And then they had laughed again—a little frightened.

But she was remembering another night—months later—the last time they were together. They had walked across the square—past the children squatting in the dust and the fat women sprawling on the benches with their babies—to the secret room.

"No one knows about this place but you—no one has been here but you," he told her. This had been his refuge from the intimacy of his aunt's home—here were his books and cluttered papers—here he came to be alone.

But this last night he had not come to be alone. They had gone in together and she remembered that place—always—as a still, deep pool.

IV

THERE was a burst of laughter from the other room. Mrs. Bowen turned startled eyes toward Ella, who, with a loaded tray, was placidly moving toward the door.

"The young folks are having a great time, Ma'am," she ventured. "I expect they'll eat every one of these little cakes."

Perhaps Rita was telling the story now. Mrs. Bowen did not want to go back to that noisy room, but she might tiptoe to the door. She crossed the little hallway and listened a moment. Rita's voice was telling something—she widened the crack—

"My dear, it was too good to be true—just like the pictures in the supplements—the king all dolled up in gold braid and the queen in a dowdy suit and a pork pie hat—"

Mrs. Bowen sighed in relief. Not yet—perhaps Rita might even forget to tell the story at all. She tiptoed back to the kitchen.

She never thought that John Gason

could have a son like that—not bad—just foolish—"A bounder and a jazz-hound," Maud had said. He must have been very much of a bounder to make the girls critical—it seemed to Mrs. Bowen that they stood a good deal from the youths they knew.

She had never been certain that John Gason had married at all, but as the years passed she had surrounded him in her thoughts with beautiful sons and daughters. She could not conceive that life for him could be anything but beautiful and that he had never come back to her in no way changed her belief in his right to happiness.

After all these years she had heard of him at last. And he had not been surrounded by beautiful sons and daughters. He had married someone—long ago—someone who had given him a son that made a good comic story.

His life had not been a success—he had lived, not in an old house with lovely dim rooms and wide lawns, but in an obscure hotel—and there, so the girls had learned, he had finally died alone.

She had not blamed him for seeming to forget her. At the time she had only half believed that he would come again. As the years went by, she knew that her wish had been stronger than the facts—he had made no promises and broke none. They had loved each other and that love had taught her all the courage and the beauty that she knew.

It had been the one real thing of her life. Why did people pretend that only marriage was important? Or were all lives like hers—did people marry only to begin remembering? Perhaps it had been the same with John Gason—now that she knew how his life had run, it seemed as if they had never parted.

She wished she could have comforted him for his defeat. She would have liked to tell him of her life and that it had not mattered so much that he had gone away and not come back again. Suppose there had been only Fred and nothing to remember? That early love had saved her from bitterness. It had even made her able to marry Fred with-

out a feeling of defeat—so vast a tenderness had it bequeathed her.

She had a lovely home, a good husband and two handsome daughters—yet in a way her life, too, was a failure. Fred was fond of noise and speed—he liked up-to-date things—the latest Victrola records—the newest contrivances for his car—none of the things that she had cared for most meant anything to him at all. Long ago she had put aside her preferences—she had gone Fred's way with Fred, but it had meant that all her life with him she had only been partly alive. With the girls, too, it had been the same—they had always seemed more Fred's children than her own.

So far as she could see, the part of her that in her youth had seemed most precious had become waste land. No one planted seed in this once fertile soil—there were no more blossoms.

And whereas the thought of John Gason, alive and successful, surrounded by beautiful sons and daughters, had always held her a little shy and apart—John Gason, dead and defeated, was once more the close companion of her heart. It was as if now she saw that each of them had only had the high time of life together.

She did not mean to minimize the rest—she was not only a dreamer—if she had been, she would never have married Fred. She liked her pretty clothes, her house and garden. In the spring when the soil was moist and warm she loved to plunge her hands into the crumbly earth, gently planting each small seed. She was proud of her girls with their short, crisp hair and easy, decided ways. And she was genuinely fond of Fred—his big clumsiness and the way he trotted around their room in the morning—for all the world like a little boy with his hair on end like a teddy bear's.

But these things, after all, were mostly surface things—like leaves floating on water—like ripples caused by the wind or the tiny, lapping waves along the shore. They weren't deep down—so far that the sun could never reach and the wind could never touch—

Only once in her life had she gone so

far—had she known so deep and so silent and so dark a pool.

V

"EMMA—Oh, Em—"

Mrs. Bowen hastily picked up the bread knife and was busily slicing a loaf when Fred creaked open the door.

"Whatever are you doing, Emma? Can't Ella do this?—if she can't it's time we got someone who can. The idea—you working and missing all the fun! Come on in now—Rita's telling stories—say, that girl's got a gift—I tell you."

He had taken hold of her arm and was pushing her gently, fondly toward the big room—now murky with cigarette smoke. Through the door Fred had left open she could see Rita, her shrewd, pointed little face with its quick, bright eyes—and Maud with her scornful mouth and straight black hair. Harry McIntyre was perched on one arm of Rita's chair and the Daniels boy was lolled at her feet.

Rita—the English accent forgotten—was talking.

"Almost all our lives we'd heard about John Gason—been brought up on him, you might say. He was one of mother's suitors before father came along. She had about a million—but this Gason was the most elegant Johnny of the bunch. Anyhow, he was no tightwad—it was really because he'd left so many presents lying around that Maud and I got to know about him—"

Fred was beside her, Fred was nudging her arm.

"She knows how to put it over, doesn't she?" he whispered, his face dark with pride.

Emma nodded back at him, smiling. A long, long way off Rita's mouth was shaping words and a long, long way off sounds came faintly. What they were didn't matter any more. . . .

"You can imagine," Rita was coming to the climax, "how we felt when we learned that *this* was the elegant Mr. Gason's son!"

Everyone was bursting into laughter—Fred was laughing the loudest of them all.

"By George, Emma—that's a good story."

Emma wiped the tears of laughter

from her eyes. She slipped her hand under Fred's arm.

"Oh, isn't it?" she gasped. "And no one could tell it better than Rita."

"You're right," Fred agreed gravely.

"No one can beat *that* kid."



A Rimless Zero

By Malcolm M. Willey

UP in the stackroom of the library of the world's largest university is a woman who earns her living by brushing the dust from the thousands and thousands of accumulated volumes. As she goes about her work she has to be very quiet so as not to disturb the young man who sits nearby and scowls should she but make a sound. He is writing a book.



Song

By Josephine Johnson

*I'll bind no willow on my brow
For other men to see,
Though its dark shadow from my thoughts
Can never lifted be.*

*I'll pluck no rue with these two hands,
Enough it is to know
That in the garden of my heart
Naught else but rue can grow.*

*But one sweet sprig of rosemary
I'll wear—and mark it well!
I broke it for the lad whose soul,
Men say, has gone to hell.*



Flapperiana

By John Torcross

"**H** E'S just a boy I know." "I know I'm not as pretty as she is." "He calls me up all the time, but I tell him I'm busy." "I'd much rather have a man as a friend than a girl." "Let's have one more." "But you *do* love me, don't you?" "He wanted to marry me, but I couldn't be annoyed." "He'd be all right, but he's so conceited." "I love to hear you talk. You look so cute." "I must have lost it." "You're so funny." "Don't be silly. I hardly know him." "Please smoke it. I love the smell of a cigar." "You know I'd much rather be with you, dear, but I simply couldn't . . ." "Oh, it's nothing serious. He just amuses me." "Just because I'm a little late, you needn't act that way." "I

don't know why you like *me*." "Oh, he doesn't mean anything." "I can tell fortunes. Give me your hand." "Isn't that funny? I thought all along there was something wrong with my watch." "Anyway, I'm not a cat." "I started to telephone you, but I didn't know whether you would be in." "Now, I'm not clever like some girls." "Do you think you can be in love more than once?" "I suppose all girls say the same thing to you." "Can't you always tell, right away, if you're going to like someone?" "I could never marry anyone I didn't love." "I feel that you understand me." "I know you think I'm just a silly girl." "I wish that I were a man." . . .



T HE aim of civilization is to make men enlightened. The result of enlightenment is to make them regret that they are no longer happy savages.



W HEN a woman begins to spend all of her money for clothes it is a sign that she isn't so sure of the man she thought she was so sure of.



I NNOCENCE, unless feigned, usually spoils a pretty woman.



Répétition Générale

By H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan

Platform.—Further planks in the platform of the editors of this magazine, candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the United States:

26

Believing that the City of New York at the present time is a distinct entity and utterly dissociated spiritually, mentally and culturally from the rest of the country; believing that it is in no sense an integral part of the nation and that it is completely superior to it—they agree, if elected, to permit it to secede from the union, and to set up its own form of government, and to maintain itself, if it so chooses, as a kind of Carthage or Monte Carlo. They agree, further, to use all their influence, both legitimate and devious, to persuade the then ruling authorities of the city to deport into the interior, without paying head-tax, among others, Bishop Manning, John S. Sumner, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, the members of the Union League Club in toto, Babe Ruth, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and all save three of the magistrates and justices holding forth at the present time in the courts of the municipality.

27

They agree to return Cuba to the Spaniards *at once*, believing that the American occupation, together with the setting up of a democratic form of government, succeeded in turning what was previously one of the most charming and romantic spots in the world into a dumping ground for American race-track touts, Cook's tourists, Broadway demi-mondaines, vacationing Congress-

men, stock salesmen, Anglo-Saxon hoochie-coochie dancers, moving-picture actors and directors, and the kind of American who at home smokes ten-cent cigars.

28

They will, directly they take the oath of office, suppress all of the foreign language newspapers now published in the United States, on the ground that these newspapers, which might be important organs, are now so badly written and edited that they are worthless.

29

They will see to it that Congress makes doubly large annual appropriations for the Air Service branch of the national offense and defense, and that Congress passes a law making it possible for a poor boy to become an officer in that branch of the service.

30

They agree, immediately they are installed in office, to abolish all the present national holidays, save one: Washington's Birthday.

31

They promise a vigorous fight against any attempt to repeal the Mann Act on the ground that such repeal would materially and dangerously reduce the already greatly depleted earnings of the railroads, and would thus ultimately bring about the collapse of certain railroad systems absolutely vital to the prosperity of the country and the conduct of its business.

41

32

They will increase the eight hour working day to twelve, abolish all half-holidays, all overtime, and all laboring men's pensions, and will grant immunity to any fair employer who, when one of his laborers annoys him either in person or by delegate, grabs a spittoon and breaks it over the appellant's head.

33

They agree to maintain the President's yacht, the *Mayflower*, at their own expense, and not to sponge on the Government. They will also supply their own liquor.

34

They promise on their sacred words of honor that they will not at any time during their period of office travel through the country and shake hands with the yokels.

35

They will make no speeches.

36

They promise to dress precisely as they dressed before election to office and not suddenly affect a note of dignified grandeur by putting on cutaway coats and plug hats.

37

Two weeks after induction into office they agree to have had covered with heavy tarpaulins every discoverable statue showing the late Theodore Roosevelt in the uniform of a Colonel in the United States Army and striking a heroic pose.

38

They promise that they will treat the official representatives of other foreign countries with the same courtesy that they show toward the British.

39

They will put an immediate stop to the further manufacture of motion

pictures and other illegal instruments for the prevention of conception.

40

They will appoint James A. Reed, of Missouri, Secretary of State; William Randolph Hearst, of New York, Secretary of the Navy; E. W. Howe, of Kansas, Secretary of the Interior; J. P. Morgan, Jr., of New York, Secretary of the Treasury (an office held in perpetuity by his firm and family); and George Sterling, of California, Secretary of War.

41

Within ten days after their inauguration, they promise to call a special session of Congress and urge the passage of a bill taxing all reformers, of whatever variety, 95 per cent. of the graft they have glommed and of the bribes they have taken.

42

They stipulate that they will, immediately after taking office, turn the Philippines over to Japan and that, further, they will coincidentally send Japan a cablegram expressing condolence.

43

Mr. Nathan agrees, if elected, never to accept an invitation to visit the place of his birth, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and to meet and speak to the residents. He also agrees to this if not elected. Mr. Mencken agrees, if elected, never to chew tobacco on a public occasion save when granting an audience to the Italian ambassador.

44

Both candidates are bachelors. They offer this point as one of the strongest proofs of their fitness for the office.

45

They will invite no moving-picture actresses or directors to the White

House, and no Seventh Day Adventist evangelists.

46

They will permit no small plaster of paris busts of themselves to be made or sold.

47

Neither of them plays golf.

48

Since they are writing men by profession, they promise that their public documents and messages will be expressed in language that their constituents can understand.

49

They agree to the passage of a law making it a felony for any person or persons, singly or collectively, to collect money for any foreign starving babies, destitute families, destroyed towns or villages, refugees from massacres, or anything else. Their watchword will be: American money for Americans.

49a

They will, immediately after taking the oath of office, pardon all the counterfeiters now languishing in prison.

50

They solemnly promise to keep what liquor they need and want in the White House and not in the nearby houses of rich and friendly bounders.

51

They will keep their photographs out of the rotogravure sections.

52

They promise before God that they will never write a congratulatory letter to the father of twenty-two children.

53

If elected, they promise, for the first time in the history of American Pres-

idents since Thomas Jefferson, to wear decent looking shoes.

54

They agree to create a new Secretaryship in their Cabinet—the exact title not yet decided upon—to be filled by the appointment of Senator Edwards, late governor of New Jersey.

55

They agree, in the interests of history, to suppress and to have burned all save two books written by Americans and Englishmen on the subject of the late war.

56

They agree, within ten days after their inauguration, to issue an executive order permitting the enlistment of Christians in the Quartermaster's Department of the Army on exactly the same terms as Jews.

57

Believing, as they do, that the influence of the so-called Y. M. C. A. is destructive to the natural instincts and virtues of normal young men, they engage to establish public sanatoria, under competent psychiatrists, for the treatment and cure (if possible) of youths who have been exposed to this pernicious miasma.

58

They agree to withdraw all American forces from Haiti and San Domingo within one week of their induction into office, and to levy a special income tax of 100%, retroactive for five years, upon all American bankers and other thieves who have profited, either directly or indirectly, by the invasion of those republics.

59

They agree to restrict the Red Cross to its proper business of succoring the wounded in time of war, to make it genuinely neutral once more, and to remove all international bankers and

munitions manufacturers from its directorate.

60

They agree to continue Sir John Pershing as commanding general of the Army and to give him ten additional medals, provided only that he stops making idiotic speeches and resigns from the Elks.

61

They agree to limit the number of English lecturers touring the United States to 5,000 head a year, and to levy upon each a poll-tax of \$25.

62

They agree to retire Chief Justice Taft and send him to the Philippines.

63

They agree to restore the bars upon all American passenger ships, with the following schedule of prices: beer, 5 cents a glass; cocktails, 15 cents straight; highballs, 20 cents; champagne, \$4 a quart.

64

They agree to restore the old Absinthe House in New Orleans at government expense, and to detail a lieutenant and 20 men of the Army to guard and operate it.

65

They agree to prohibit absolutely the sale or transportation of so-called Key West cigars.

66

They promise to change the face of the Goddess of Liberty as it appears on the present coinage, so that the lady will look less like a senescent school-marm and more like a cutie.

66a

They will remove from the coinage the inscription, "In God We Trust."

§ 2

The Inescapable Burden.—All government, whatever its form, is a burden and a curse to the citizen, and especially to the citizen who is industrious, law-abiding and well-disposed. A great deal of breath is wasted in discussing comparatively the various forms. There is actually very little difference between them. The man who works hard at some useful task, pays his debts and asks only to be let alone is often robbed and insulted, no doubt, under a monarchy, but he is robbed and insulted quite as often, and perhaps oftener, under a republic. Most of the laws that are passed, no matter what the form of government under which he lives, have either the purpose of restricting his liberty or the purpose of adding to his expenses. The aim of law, practically considered, is not to protect the citizen, but to prosper the government, *i.e.*, the men constituting the government, *i.e.*, a caste of parasites, most of them incompetent and all of them more or less dishonest. There is no such thing, speaking generally, as an honest public official. Even the most diligent of them—and few are even diligent—lives a lie, for he pretends to be concerned about the public good, whereas his sole actual concern is his own job. Especially under a republic, which always stands opposed to notions of honor, it is difficult, if not downright impossible, to imagine a public official who could be trusted to forfeit his job in order to work what he conceived to be the public good. Such a man, if he were encountered, would be looked upon as insane by almost everyone, and with sound reason. His true trade is not serving the public, but preying upon the public. It is always to his interest to harass the citizen as much as possible and to make the business as expensive as possible. His ideal would be a state in which the total income of the wage-earners, over and above the bare cost of their subsistence, was collected in taxes and spent for the upkeep of a horde of job-holders. We are fast

approaching that ideal in the United States.

The most secure and prosperous, and hence the happiest private citizen under any form of government is that one who is most adept at dodging the burdens which government puts upon him, which is to say, most adept at law-breaking and tax-dodging. This, at first blush, may sound like nonsense, but only brief reflection is needed to show that it is true. Here in the United States a citizen who made up his mind to obey all the laws leveled at him and to pay all of the taxes legally falling upon him, without the slightest attempt at evasion, would soon find himself in the hopeless position of a prisoner on ticket of leave without a cent in his pocket. In order to survive at all, he must try to beat the government, *i.e.*, the organized body of job-holders, at its effort to reduce him to the level of a mere slave in its bullpen; in order to snatch any share of joy and comfort for himself between the cradle and the grave he must learn to violate the laws restricting his liberty. I doubt that any man could survive in the United States for one week in any commercial business without consciously violating some federal, state or municipal law. Any man who endeavored to obey even the majority of such laws would quickly succumb to the competition of men determined and able to evade as many of them as possible. It would be quite useless for such a man to try to escape ruin by protesting against unjust and confiscatory laws, and seeking to have them repealed. It would be almost as useless for the whole body of such men to join in such a protest. The thing, indeed, has been tried; the business men of the nation, through their large and apparently powerful organizations, are always demanding that this or that law oppressing them be repealed. But, despite the popular notion that they are vastly influential, they nearly always fail to get what they want. This is simply because the corps of professional job-holders is even more influential—and because it is to the interest of this

corps to prevent the repeal of any law which makes jobs for its members.

Here lies one of the hurdles that the opponents of Prohibition will have to leap, and they will be agile, indeed, if they ever get over it. As it becomes more and more evident that the enforcement of Prohibition is a practical impossibility, the job-holders now told off for the task will demand more and more help, and so, in the course of time, they will constitute a body of job-holders so numerous and so powerful that they will find it easy to block the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, however loudly a majority of the plain citizens of the country may demand it. Their very existence, and especially their formidable numbers, will constitute a sound reason, in many unreflective minds, for continuing them in office, despite their waste of money and their incurable uselessness, for most men are disposed to accept whatever exists as necessary, and to refrain from disagreeable inquiries into reasons and causes. Most Americans, for example, still regard it as part of the essential nature of things that boards of alderman, *i.e.*, organized bands of licensed thieves, should exist. The fact that they have been abolished in a number of cities, to the benefit of both the taxpayers and the public business, is not generally known. Where they still exist they have existed so long that no one save a few specialists in such matters ever thinks of proposing their abolition. They are accepted as necessary simply because they are in office.

It is the aim of every bureaucracy to create this assumption of its essential necessity, and it almost always succeeds. The means employed to that end are simple enough. They consist, in the main, of devices whereby functions that are purely bureaucratic, and hence useless to the citizens generally, are inextricably mingled with functions that are actually necessary to the conduct of the most elementary business of the state. That trick was worked in Washington on a large scale immediately after the late war. The war had brought a great

army of political rogues and vagabonds, male and female, to Washington, and all of them had been given good jobs in the government service, many at extraordinary lavish salaries. No one, to this day, knows just how many thus got their hooves into the public trough, but at the time of the armistice the number must have been well beyond 150,000. Once the armistice was signed the higher government officials at Washington, though job-holders themselves, saw that this huge pillaging of the public treasury would have to stop, and so plans were made to reduce the force. But when the business was undertaken, it was immediately found to be very difficult. The ostensible excuse for the employment of so many prehensile patriots, of course, had passed, but in the brief interval between its passing and the beginning of the attempt to dislodge them, most of them succeeded so well in introducing themselves into the normal functions of the government that it was impossible to throw them out without grave confusion and damage. In point of fact, it took three years to pry the majority of them loose from their jobs, and a respectable minority still hangs on. Dr. Harding, when he was inaugurated, promised solemnly to get rid of all of them, and so save millions of dollars for the taxpayers, but to this day he has been quite unable, with the best intentions in the world, to carry out his promise literally. Some of the most tenacious will survive for years, useless but unscotchable.

The Prohibition enforcement officers, nine-tenths of whom, as everyone knows, are thoroughly dishonest and disreputable, and many of whom are professional criminals, are going the same route. To their ostensible function of enforcing Prohibition, a sheer impossibility but theoretically a necessity, they are gradually adding the general functions of a government police, i.e., an organized force of spies, *agents provocateurs* and blackmailers. One no longer hears from their headquarters that they are preventing the consumption of alcohol as a beverage; one hears

that they are putting down crime. When the former function, either by the modification of the Volstead Act or by a sort of general consent, is quietly abandoned, the latter will still remain, and so it will be impossible to get rid of them. Years after Prohibition is abandoned as hopeless, this bureaucracy of rogues will remain, just as in many of the states, though the sale of alcoholic beverages is everywhere prohibited, the old forces of excise officials remain. The only practicable way to get rid of the latter, in truth, will be to find other functions for them. No public job-holder is ever permanently out of a job. There is, so far as I know, not a single case on record of a job-holder who, after losing one job, did not try at once to get another, and there are very few cases of such attempts, in the long run, failing.

§ 3

Notes for a Metaphysical Autobiography.—1. The most pitiable of all human emotions is the gayety of despair.

2. A woman will stop at nothing, including marriage, to convince herself that she is no longer in love with the man she is in love with.

3. To be convincing, emotion may go so far and no farther. Emotion become too intense skirts perilously the abyss of burlesque. Thus the writing of great tragedy calls for a higher genius than any other form of literary or dramatic composition.

4. The young man and the old man seek pretty women. The man of middle years finds his greatest enjoyment in the company of women who are comparatively plain. Unlike the young man and the old man he is in that period of his life where he does not wish to exert himself and the comparatively plain woman offers him much less of the customary resistance of a pretty woman's vanity. The young man takes pride in conquering the challenge of that vanity. The old man, a dodo in vanity on his own, seeks to recapture his youth in

similarly taking up the challenge. The middle-aged man is between the two poles. What he wants, and wants above everything in women, is a charming, engaging and romantically warming comfort.

5. The telegraph and the telephone have done more to bring irritation and unhappiness into our daily lives than all the other devices of mortal man in combination.

6. Love demands infinitely less than friendship.

7. It is utterly impossible for a poverty-stricken man to understand my point of view. Thus, I never pay the slightest attention to criticisms of my writings from men condemned to miserable lives.

8. Beware the sexlessness of them who talk most of sex!

9. Bismarck's greatness lay in the masterly greatness of his errors. Kaiser Wilhelm's pettiness lay in the masterly pettiness of his triumphs.

10. The world is run not by thought but by opinion.

11. What is called dignity is a subterfuge wherewith second-rate men seek to conceal their deficiencies.

12. The praise of inferior men is insulting. The condemnation of inferior men is comic.

§ 4

Homo Sapiens.—Man, at best, is a sort of one-lunged animal. If he shows one valuable quality, it is almost unheard of for him to show any other. The artist, nine times out of ten, is a dead-beat. The patriot is a bigot, and, more often than not, a coward. The man of physical bravery is often on a level, intellectually, with a Baptist clergyman. In all my forty-odd years of life I have never met a thoroughly moral man who was honorable.

§ 5

Portrait of a Young Woman.—She is in the very early twenties, slim, dark, and when bothered about this or that jumps suddenly up from her chair and begins rapidly pacing back and forth,

with head bowed and in silence. She then as suddenly sits down in the chair again, raises her head, laughs quietly to herself, and goes off on another subject altogether. She is slangy, but vividly, racily so: her slang is her own, rich in an original and ironically humorous coinage. She promptly calls every man she meets and likes by his first name, and the second time she uses it she usually reduces it to its diminutive. She has a habit now and then of quickly turning her head to the right and darting a glance over her shoulder, as if afraid that she is being watched by a mythical someone who is mythically following her. There are times when she doesn't say a word for twenty minutes. And when she speaks again it is about something that hasn't the remotest possible connection with anything that would seem to have concerned and occupied the silence of her thoughts. She is polite to those persons about whom subsequently she makes the shrewdest and most completely devastating criticism.

She uses words of one syllable. She knows five words of three and four syllables, mispronounces them when she uses them, and laughs at herself for her awkwardness. She says that she has a number of elegant long words like these in her head, but has an awful time getting them out, and hence sticks to the little safe ones. She goes up and talks to every policeman she sees at traffic crossings and on the streets. She likes policemen. She has always admired policemen since she was a little girl. If she goes away on a journey, she cries all the night before and the next morning wakes up all smiles and happiness. There is something about going away, from any place, anywhere, or for any reason, that makes her unhappy—she doesn't know why. There is no real reason. It is just so. But her unhappiness is soon over, though why—that she doesn't know either. Who does? She likes poor men; she can be friends with them; they are companionable. Rich men, for some reason, aren't.

She is anything but pretty, yet no one

realizes it. When she speaks, her eyes, little and black, shine out like suddenly polished ebony. She is as naïve as a child, as intuitively wise as a woman. She moves with the kid grace of a dotted Swiss curtain blown gently by the breezes of warm and early Spring. She flops down on chairs and sofas like a long, thin, inflated paper bag out of which some urchin has suddenly clapped the wind. Every ten minutes or so, and for no intelligible reason whatsoever, she exclaims "Ye Gods!" She says that she was once engaged to a man who always looked at her with love-hungry eyes at the dinner table when she was trying to negotiate her oysters, and that this is what brought the engagement to an end. When she sits down, her toes turn in.

She likes to walk with exaggeratedly long strides. It amuses her. She has never read a book through to the end. She says she hasn't time. She has nothing but time. She derives her amusement instead from sending Dadaist wireless messages to men sailing for Europe whom she has met only once and then but briefly, from getting nobly plastered on one-third of a Scotch highball, from extoling the beauty of coon men at dignified dinner parties and taking infinite delight at the shocked expressions of her elders, particularly the women, from shooting quickly in and out of revolving doors and bumping the person or persons ahead of her, and from sliding so far down in chairs that her head and shoulders are almost on a level.

When she enters a room, she promptly takes off her bracelets and lays them on a table—for utterly no reason save that they seem to be in her way, also for utterly no reason. She walks upstairs three stairs at a time. She is downstairs before one has negotiated the first two steps. She never eats candy; never wears flowers; and is truthful to the point of deadliness. She goes to church early every Sunday morning and begins to make plans to raise innocent hell immediately she gets out. She is able to make the most alarm-

ing remarks with the look and manner of one who hasn't the vaguest idea of what they mean. She informs every man she meets who still has his hair that she is so glad he isn't bald. The confession disconcerts the newcomer, and while he is still struggling for an appropriate answer, she goes on breathlessly to confide to him that she doesn't love bald-headed men. She jumps up and down while her maid is dressing her.

She wears funny-looking hats in order, she says, to distract attention from her face. A banal quip will occasionally make such a profound impression on her and amuse her so greatly that she will laugh heartily over it and repeat it over and over for the next few weeks. She takes delight in taking a magazine to bed with her at night and counting the words in the stories. In the wet season, she buys no less than seventy-five pairs of rubbers, always forgetting where she left the last pair. She sometimes appears wearing but one rubber. It usually isn't her own. She has kissed her father just once in the last ten years and that was after she had had one-half of a cocktail; he didn't know what to make of the sudden burst of affection, and is still puzzled. She dislikes cigarettes and when urged to smoke one for companionship's sake consumes it with seven or eight quick, homeric puffs. She invariably spills the ashes upon her dress and brushes them off upon you. Eternally on the go and as active as a French verb, she yet convincingly pretends to like tranquillity and the assurance of restfulness. These she actually does like, and still somehow does not. She is young and crazy; she is quick and vagrant; she is as wholly nonsensical, and as wholly insidious, as life itself. . . .

§ 6

Theological Note. — Religion is charming only when it is insincere. A devotée on her knees in some abysmal and mysterious cathedral, the while solemn music sounds, and clouds of incense come down the wind, and far-off

priests busy themselves with the stately ceremonies of an exotic and unintelligible ritual—this is beautiful. But the same devotée aroused to living faith by the shrieks and contortions of some passionate evangelist, her knees trembling with the fear of God and her hands clenched as if to do combat with devils—this is merely obscene.

§ 7

Panacea.—The most nonsensical of all the proposed substitutes for war is arbitration, a panacea of traders too ignoble to fight for their property and their honor. Could it have prevented the Civil War? Suppose the award had gone against the South. Would the despoiled Confederates have accepted it? Would a householder of any spirit accept the award of arbitrators who gave his goods to a burglar?

§ 8

The Monthly Award.—Répétition Générale's prize $3\frac{1}{2}$ by $4\frac{3}{4}$ custard pie, awarded monthly to the most ineffable dose of whim-wham exposed to the public during the period, is herewith announced to have been won by Mr. W. A. P. John for his article on W. C. Durant, an automobile manufacturer, printed in *Motor*. Although the article in its entirety is a masterpiece of the art of goose-grease, the pie goes to Mr. John specifically for this elegant set-piece with which he winds up:

There is in him one characteristic which when he stands in the dazzling light of Judgment Day will overshadow and outweigh even his honesty, his sincerity, his kindness, his faith in his fellow men, and his appreciation of their trust. And that characteristic is his love for his mother. Of the dozens with whom I have spoken concerning him, most have singled out that particular trait as most indicative of the man. They told me how in the midst of the most pressing and vitally important situations he has dropped everything and rushed across the country when advised that she was indisposed; how he has always managed to take some sort of a vacation at her side at her summer home in Pentwater, Michigan; how when she was still in

S. S.—July—4

her youthful eighties it was not an infrequent sight for them to be seen together at the theatre and later at some youthfully atmospheric restaurant; how her slightest wish has always been to him more than an imperial command; how he has spent four nights in a sleeper to be with her a few hours; how they have been constant companions and idolized each other; how he has always been her boy, "Willie."

And so at the very end of our first meeting I made bold to mention that knowledge to Mr. Durant. He listened to me in silence—gazing out over the park; and his eyes (it unbalanced me for the moment) glistened with tears.

"Yes," he said quietly, as he rose and walked quickly towards his office, in an endeavor to conceal his emotion, "that's all quite true, Mr. John. Every word of it. She has always thought I was a wonderful boy. And I have tried not to disappoint her."

§ 9

The Higher Learning in America.—From a public bull by the Rev. William Oxley Thompson, A.B., A.M., D.D., LL.D., president of the Ohio State University, on the occasion of the suspension of four students on a charge of buying liquor from a bootlegger:

The man who disregards the Volstead act by buying intoxicating liquor is a menace to the principles of democracy.

§ 10

Venture Into Therapeutics.—It is not in my nature to believe in remedies for the great moral, social and politico-economic ills that afflict the human race, and so I seldom waste my time trying to devise one, but on this fair day in Spring, with the bulbuls burling under my palace windows and a couple of cases of 8% Pennsylvania malt liquor sweating in the ice-box, it occurs to me that it might be a good idea to proceed against the Ku Klux Klan, the Freemasons, the American Legion, the Rotary Club and other such bands of bellicose morons by attempting a counter offensive. I do not, of course, propose the thing already proposed and rejected, to wit a *super-Klan* of the relatively civilized, clad in black chemises instead of white, and armed with rifles

instead of clubs and torches. In the South, where the Klan itself chiefly functions, the relatively civilized form too small a minority to make an effective army of liberation; moreover, most of the judges, sheriffs, district attorneys, chiefs of police, militia colonels and other such servants of the secular arm down there are earnest Klansmen, and so the super-Klan would have to face, not only the Klan itself, but the full military and naval strength of all the states south of the Potomac. The scheme thus reduces itself to futility and banality.

My scheme is simpler and, I believe, more charming and romantic. I first proposed it to another end, years ago—in fact, long before the Klan got into motion. I now propose it again, with a few slight changes. In brief, it is this: that the enemies and victims of the Klan get together, make up a war fund of \$1,000,000 cash, and then employ it to import Mohammedan missionaries from Turkey and turn them loose among the Aframericans of the South. In six months half the dark brethren would be converted to the Islamic revelation; in nine months the remaining half would be bagged; in a year the whole body would be organized into a compact and formidable army, armed with scimitars and making ready to burn Atlanta and put the Legislature of Georgia to the sword. And then, as we say in Amerikanisch, good-night!

That the Moors of the late Confederacy would quickly succumb to Moslem theology I don't doubt for an instant. In Africa, where Moslem and Christian missionaries have been in conflict for a generation past, the blood brothers of our Southern Ethiops have gone over to the crescent almost unanimously; there are now, indeed, millions of square miles in Africa wherein Christian missionaries are quite as much *ferae naturae*, to be taken freely by anyone's trap, as Prohibition enforcement officers in Michigan. Let a newcomer halt in the plaza of a jungle village, take off his hat and begin to sing "Onward, Christian Sol-

diers," and at once his head is chopped off, and he is thrown to the hyenas. The reason is not far to seek. Islam promises a paradise that any darkey, however defective his education, can instantly understand and appreciate; Christianity offers a paradise that can charm him only when he is hysterical or drunk. The former is peopled with gaudy houris, and its days are given over to lucullan feasts; the latter offers only an endless and meaningless playing of harps—a form of music that the dark races have never taken to spontaneously. I say that an Ethiop must be hysterical or drunk in order to believe in the latter. I mean it literally. The Methodist revival embodies a deliberate effort to get him into the former condition. The pastor who would make him genuinely eager for grace must first harrow him so vastly that he begins to foam at the mouth, emit inarticulate yells, and roll on the floor—symptoms so characteristic of hysteria that even a chiropractor, an Iowa midwife or a fashionable New York physician would recognize them at once.

The truth is that the darker citizens of the South have been swinging away from Christianity for a number of years past—that is, from the barbarous, hell-fire variety of Christianity now chiefly prevailing down there. In slavery days Methodism met their spiritual needs very aptly, and so they embraced it in great numbers, but as they have gradually taken on enlightenment they have found it increasingly unsatisfactory. Its decay among them, while it remains, in some form or other, endemic among the whites, is due to the fact that the blacks, in recent decades, have been going ahead much faster than the whites. A great many of the more advanced blacks have gone over boldly to the so-called Protestant Episcopal Church, to Christian Science, or even to the Church of Rome; a few extraordinarily daring spirits have become rationalists, despite the fact that rationalism is prohibited by law in most of the Southern states.

This movement, of course, is not

open and public; its dangers, in a region where even governors and United States senators are Methodists, or even Baptists, enforce secrecy; the enfolding Aframericans, like the Christians of the first centuries, have to seek security in catacombs. But this minority, of course, would not succumb to Islam. The recruits would come from the great majority, still faithful to Methodism outwardly but greatly discontented with its lack of sense and dignity, and now much alarmed by its undisguised alliance with the Ku Klux Klan. Christianity, as these inferior blacks see it, is little more than a scheme for perpetuating, post-mortem, the superiorities and immunities of the white trash in this vale. Let a colored preacher promise from his pulpit that such a man as Dr. Booker T. Washington will be the full equal of the Hon. Cole Blease in Heaven, and he will be lucky if he escapes slow roasting at the stake. Islam makes no such illogical distinctions. All coons looked alike to Mohammed—which is to say, all appeared to be of the same pure and resplendent white. In his paradise the blackest field hand is the exact equal of Brünnhilde, Jack Dempsey and the Hon. John Sharp Williams.

Christianity, as everyone knows, is based upon counsels of humility. Even Methodism, which preaches a holy war against Catholics, Darwinians, Jews, Irishmen, Germans, Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, Socialists, bootleggers, dancers, theatrical managers, monarchists, card-players and, in the South, Republicans and negroes, and does not hesitate to incite its communicants to dispatch them in God's name and so get them quickly into hell—even Methodism teaches the colored folk to show an humble mien and accept their persecutions with docility. But Mohammedanism teaches them to rise and resist—more, to take the offensive against their enemies. This teaching, it must be obvious, would not only spread a very grateful ointment upon the abraded egos of the Southern black folk; it would also direct them to the only prac-

ticable way out of their present woes. If they wait for their oppressors to let them up voluntarily, they will wait until Gabriel blows his horn. In order to get out at all, they must hack their way out. Islam offers them the counsel and the technique; the same missionaries who teach them the Koran will also teach them how to exercise with the curved sabre. Thus they will leap instantly from the mourners' bench to the trench, and blood will begin to flow before their instructors have come to the collection.

The objections to the plan, of course, are many and obvious. It would cost, I daresay, a great many lives. But the persons likely to be sacrificed by its execution would die, soon or late, anyhow, and not many of them are of much value to the world. As for the black Moslems who would fall in the war, no one, even in the South, argues that they would be greatly missed, save perhaps by the local witch-doctors, collectors for lodges, and sellers of decoctions for straightening kinky hair. As for the whites, they already testify, by their membership in the Ku Klux Klan, that they are advocates of murder, and probably a good many of them are experienced practitioners of it. To be dispatched by a neat stroke of steel is certainly more comfortable than to be burned at the stake, or even than to die of malaria, wood alcohol poisoning, tick bites or hookworm—the probable fate of most of these persons by God's inscrutable plan. A grand battle in Georgia, with 100,000 killed, would of course cause some excitement throughout the United States, but that excitement would be purely national. In Europe the news would be received as calmly as intelligence of a disastrous flood on the Ho-ang-ho. In brief, no one of any importance would be killed, save perhaps a few luckless strangers, temporarily deposited on the scene by train-wrecks. The South is extremely fecund. It could replace its losses in one year.

That a rising of the blacks under the banner of Islam would be illegal I pre-

sume to doubt. The American courts have decided more than once that a crime committed by a large body of persons, acting deliberately in concert, is not punishable under our laws—that the *posse comitatus* is, in a very real sense, itself a law-making body. In case their acts amount to rebellion, the Federal power, of course, may be called in to oppose them, but such a rising of Moslems as I have pictured would not amount to a rebellion. In the analogous case of public massacres of the blacks the Federal government, in fact, has always refused to interfere. What is sauce for the goose should surely be sauce for the gander. If, under pressure of the theological frenzy, the dark Mohammedans should undertake to put down the Ku Klux Klan by the sword, then they would be quite as clearly within their rights as the Ku Klux Klan is today when it undertakes to put down Catholicism, Judaism and the hypothesis of the evolution of species with the torch, bastinado and tar-pot. The new situation, in truth, would favor the Klan, for its members would be free to resist by force, whereas now their victims are forbidden to resist. . . .

But here, of course, I indulge in speculation. The whole question remains theoretical and academic. It will not take on practical importance until someone sends for the Moslem missionaries.

§ 11

Happiness.—The trouble with happiness is that it generally comes to one too early in life. I speak of course, of the *sensation* of happiness, not happiness in its permanence which, equally of course, is a bird so rare as to be almost non-existent. In youth there are many more moments of happiness than there are in later years; youth is made happy by things that age is not; it is more easily tickled and satisfied by those phenomena of life that produce what passes for happiness. To be made happy, age demands phenomena increasingly novel and vastly more complex. As sensations decrease

in power with repetition, happiness thus becomes a weaker and weaker emotion as life goes on. It suffers a discounting; the warmth that it leaves as its residuum becomes less and less warm. The happiness of a little boy over a Christmas stocking filled with peppermint candy, tangerine oranges and pretty tissue paper cornucopias, were it susceptible of psychological laboratory analysis, would be found to be of six times the voltage of the happiness of the same little boy, now arrived at the age of fifty who had just achieved his millionth dollar.

§ 12

The Polished Intellect.—Proof of the fact that travel mellows and improves the human mind, from an article entitled "Importance of the Key in Life," by W. E. Peck, in the *Log*, a bi-monthly magazine published by the Circumnavigators' Club, of New York, to which only men who have traveled around the world at least once are eligible:

A key is a little thing, but it not only has its place in life, but contributes materially to our welfare.

Picture the feelings of a man condemned to death on hearing the rattle of the jailer's key in the lock for the last time, or in contrast those of a convict when the turn of the key means freedom after years of incarceration. . . .

This key business led me to moralize and I realized how many men hold the key to success without knowing how to use it.

From a causerie by the editor in the same issue:

One finds so many "hot-dog" stands along the state highways that motoring is nothing more than shopping for "doggies."

From travel notes in the same:

Lord Northcliffe traveled from Vancouver to Australia on the *Makura*. He made a splendid impression among the passengers, but it was evident he went to sea for a rest, taking many of his meals in his cabin or on deck. Some people said he did this to avoid the bother of dressing. He invited several of the passengers to visit him in England, among whom was Mr. R. R. Bennett, wool buyer of Melbourne, with whom he played deck games.

I Owe It All to My Wife

By Nunnally Johnson

I

THERE were two outstanding achievements in Carl Blanchard's life. The first in importance was his marriage to Laura Warner. The second was his election to membership in the Rotary Club of Riverside. Some people, of course, said one thing and some said another, but Carl himself in his own mind, rated the two events in that order.

Laura was, for one thing, an Atlanta girl. Atlanta wives were not frequent in Riverside. Thus to have carried off one of the Capital City's high-class women, persuading her by the strength of his love making to desert the first city in the State for the fifth in size, established Carl as a man to be reckoned with, raised him almost to the level of Atlanta men. Laura was a high prize to be won.

In the second place—and this was even more noteworthy than the Atlanta nativity—Laura had once had an affair with Matty Maguire, of the Blue Sox. It was not an affair in the gross, coarse, Parisian sense of the word. It was an Atlanta, or Riverside, affair—purely social. The Blue Sox had trained at Ponce de Leon Park in Atlanta one spring, two or three years before Carl Blanchard came into Laura Warner's life, and through circumstances creditable to both, Maguire had been introduced to her. It aroused no end of respect for her in Riverside. "Matty Maguire used to have a crush on that girl," they said of her. Small boys gaped in wonder at her. Matty Maguire's girl!

Maguire was at that time a really distinguished batsman, excelling most others in the American League, and his photograph was widely circulated in ten-for-a-nickel cigarettes. A style of bat had been named for him, and he had been accorded such other distinctions as come to a man of his exceptional attainments.

It was reported in Riverside, by Laura, that actually he was scion of a very fine old Arkansas family, an only son, cut off from the family fortunes and affection by his insistence on professional baseball.

Be that as it may, Laura led him, during the flush period of the affair, into the very heart of Atlanta's most exclusive society, where he behaved unexpectedly well for a ball player. True, he was regarded, at best, as no more than an eccentric, and even Atlanta society showed signs of rebelling at his regrettable tendency to sweat profusely, especially in public, but on the whole Laura lost no caste by the episode. She appeared to be very fond of him, and baseball players, as everyone knows, must sweat.

Carl knew next to nothing of the character of her association with the famous outfielder. He assumed without question that a gentleman of such prominence as the great Matty Maguire and a girl of such respectability as Laura Warner could have been guilty of no indiscretions. Indeed, it is going too far even to say that he assumed such a stainless circumstance; actually the idea never occurred to him. He knew no baseball players personally, nor anything about their general characteristics. In

fact he knew little or thought little about anything beyond his clothing business and, when it was organized, the Rotary Club.

His only emotion on learning that one of his predecessors as suitor for her hand had been Matty Maguire was an indescribable and pleasant satisfaction. He was not a baseball fan and Maguire was no more than a resounding name to him, but everybody else, it seemed, was a fan and did know and respect Matty Maguire, and the situation brought him, by a fast double play, Maguire to Warner to Blanchard, a definite, if weak, reflected glory. It brought him spiritually close to a national figure; the great Maguire and he had shared an affection; the same eyes, the same lips, the same jet hair which Matty Maguire had honored with his interest were now honoring him, Carl Blanchard.

He felt that if he and Maguire ever met, which he regarded as not at all unlikely, they would have something in common. They might even laugh pleasantly together. Even more—"Carl" . . . "Matty."

His only information about the affair came through casual references. "Matty once said . . ." Laura would remark, and "I told Matty once . . ."—modest, careless references, with no sign that she experienced the faintest pride in the association, nor the slightest regret that it had not turned out otherwise. Nevertheless, as unforced and as rare as they were, they gave something of an air to her standing in Riverside. Carl, at first, revelled in them.

Once or twice, quite without any promptings of doubt or jealousy, he questioned her about Maguire. He really wanted some homely and more or less intimate facts about the great batter, such as he might drop casually into a conversation. She replied apparently without reticence or reserve, sketchily, as she might about any past incident of no particular importance, unconsciously providing him with the

facts he wanted but never with any that might carry evidence of the extent of her affections for Maguire. If she missed him or his letters or his sweat, if she regretted that she was not Mrs. Maguire, it never came out in her talk.

Carl's pride in having married Matty Maguire's old girl, untouched by any of the meaner emotions, never quite died. It settled and matured in him, always present if seldom exhibited except on provocation, and became a recognized part of him. His interest in the Rotary Club of Riverside was alive, moving, an animated feeling that stirred him to talk and action. It was his most conspicuous social attribute; but it never succeeded in smothering his first born, his deeply cherished distinction.

Ten years after he was married it thrilled him almost as completely as it had on the first occasion, when at the Rotary Club he was introduced to a stranger:

"This is Carl Blanchard, Mr. Madden. Remember Carl? He's the feller that cut out Matty Maguire. Sure, Matty used to be crazy about Mrs. Blanchard, the Laura Warner of Atlanta that was. Wanted to marry her and everything. But he couldn't stand the pace when an old Riverside Rotarian took the field, eh, Carl?"

Carl always laughed modestly, deprecatingly.

In time, after the ordinary excitement wore off, this pride failed to respond except under such uncommon circumstances as this introduction. It was not because Maguire's name came to carry less picturesque splendor. It was simply that it had become a part of him, a component part of him, like his belief in Rotary.

It was true, though, that the Maguire of ten years before meant less than the Maguire of that time. Other successful batters came to the American League—Sisler, Meusel, Ruth, Williams—and Matty Maguire became a manager. Eventually he retired altogether from the playing

field. He became the nominal president of the Blue Sox club, in which position his name and his unquestioned ability further benefited his old team. His name continued to mean greatness in baseball, but it resounded in a more prosaic quarter. Carl followed the newspaper accounts of these changes, but with none of the avidity with which he had followed Maguire's daily hits and runs.

He also had changed. He had come to appreciate more deeply the significances of Rotary. Where once he had been, so it seemed to him, a bounding, aimless enthusiast, a tireless worker without a positive goal, he had developed into a serious and thoughtful student of the spirit of Rotary. The spell of the great cog-wheel had settled over him. He felt that he was becoming a Rotarian in fact as well as name.

Thoughts of Maguire's prominence and his comparative nearness had become, like the thoughts of nearly everything else not Rotary in character, trifling, insignificant, irritating in contrast with this bigger, higher theme. He impatiently brushed such petty matters from his mind. He devoted himself whole-heartedly to Rotary, to a better understanding of its inspiration, its aims, its achievements. He was set, at last, on a goal, a goal so splendid that he was fairly frightened by its glory. He aimed to become President of the Rotary Club of Riverside.

II

It was most inopportune that in this solemn and critical period of Carl's mental and spiritual development there should arise events that touched, if they did not at first actually shake, his implicit confidence in the Laura Warner that was.

He had reached, after a careful analysis of the whole situation, with particular attention paid to the careers of former presidents, the conclusion that nothing less than some

spectacular service to Rotary and the business world of Riverside was necessary if he was to scale the bright heights to a presidency in Rotary. Here, then, was a situation that demanded all of his attention. For every spectacular service that he could think of had been rendered. Fred Morrison, for instance, had sponsored the movement which had resulted in the planting of elms on Broad Street. Mitchell White had stood behind the organization of the Riverside Country Club. Sam White, Mitchell's brother, had suggested and carried through a movement to build two Gothic-style comfort stations for women and children on Twelfth Street. Dave Spano had made a thorough study of vice conditions in Riverside and had embodied his conclusions in a report which had been published in the *Police Chiefs' Journal*. Frank Meridith had headed a movement to build a night kindergarten for children who worked in the Eagle Cotton Mills.

Andrew Henderson had become "the father of Riverside's motorized fire department" and had had a hook-and-ladder truck named after him. George Fletcher had, almost single-handed, put over the All-Riverside All-Church Noon Hour Service Week. Sigmund Goldberg had gone to Savannah at the head of a delegation of Rotarians and Chamber of Commerce men, working shoulder to shoulder for the common cause, and secured the 1926 convention of the United Commercial Travellers for Riverside.

There seemed little worthwhile left for Carl to accomplish.

Struggling with this situation, his thoughts were far removed from Laura's fidelity, especially far removed from her weakness of ten years before. Days passed without his remembering Matty Maguire's name at all. Then there appeared in the *Riverside Enquirer* a paragraph that brought these matters very uncomfortably near and insistent.

Laura brought it to his attention, brought it excitedly, volubly, disturbingly to his attention. Matty Maguire was coming South. He was leaving New York within a week, bound for a winter vacation at Miami, where he would remain until spring sent him to the Blue Sox's training camp.

There was nothing premonitory on the face of her suggestion that they wire him at once to stop over and visit them in Riverside. It was no more than what Carl had suggested himself, several times, during the early period of pride in the notable association. Perhaps if his whole mental and physical system had not been at a low ebb, exhausted after the painful throes of the Rotary Club situation, his attention would not have alighted so suspiciously on an unaccustomed note in Laura's voice. As it was, that note summoned all of his faculties to the alert with a snap.

Was it an anguish of suspense that he detected, a nearly hysterical inflexion of her voice? Had he been mistaken in believing that he had caught a tone of intense, too intense, anxiety in her speech?

For an instant he was almost dazed at the horrifying possibility, and then he attempted to dismiss his involuntary reactions as false and, if not false, as unworthy and shameful. He said he saw no reason why Maguire should not be invited. They discussed it for a while in relation to such matters as entertainment and engagements. Laura rattled on glibly, arranging everything with the speed and precision of an efficiency expert. And Carl, listening, found, in spite of himself, the unwelcome feeling rising again, stronger and stronger. Laura, it struck him, was far more interested in this thing than the circumstances warranted. She was obviously intensely concerned. There was a sharpness of anticipation which nothing he knew could explain. Her voice, her manner, her eyes, were strained, anxious, offering evidence of a deeper feeling than she ex-

pressed, deeper than he had ever guessed. He tried to fight down this doubt, tried to deny the facts here exhibited to him, but the doubt refused to stay down and the facts remained, stubborn and torturing.

He ignored her suggestion that a messenger boy be called. He preferred to walk himself to the telegraph office. He wanted to take his chaotic thoughts into the cold air.

On the way he debated as to whether he should send the message or not. It would be easy to say he had. The fact that no answer came would provide a welcome situation.

"He might have had the decency to acknowledge the invitation," he could say to Laura.

But still, he reflected, the doubt would remain. So long as this cloud rested on his love, chilling and darkening it, he could never again feel the same toward her, never again be happy.

Had he been blind through all these years? he wondered. Should he have seen, long ago, signs of this stifled love in her? Did he, now, see it, actually?

He dreaded the test which he knew was coming, and yet he felt that it must come. He did not want to send this message flying up to New York, but he felt that he could not do otherwise. He wanted to leave well enough alone, wanted to hypnotize himself, if he could, once more into a positive confidence in Laura, but he knew it would be impossible. All along he knew, subconsciously, what he would do about it. He had not made a success of his business, had not been elected to the Rotary Club of Riverside for being afraid to face crises. He knew that he would not evade the issue, that he would face it boldly and settle it once for all time. Indeed, he was known in Riverside as much for this quality of strength and courage as for any other. All he had done, all he was in Riverside, he owed to it.

When he reached the telegraph office he handed to the clerk a sixteen-word message, urging as strongly as space would permit that Matty Maguire honor them and their pretty little town with a visit. He signed it, "Laura Warner Blanchard and Carl Blanchard."

The next day the answer came. Matty Maguire was pleased with the invitation. He accepted. He would arrive Friday afternoon.

III

Try as he might, Carl could not, during the few days before Friday, perceive in the imminent visit any of the exciting features which once he had pictured as part of a visit from the famous slugger. The day of Matty Maguire's arrival approached like a bird of ill omen. Its auspices bore down his thoughts, drove him into a deep depression.

He was acutely aware that the visit amounted to a test of Laura's affections. He never thought of it in any other way. And for reasons that were as near occult as they were actual he feared it, dreaded it. The thing monopolized his thoughts. Even the Rotary Club situation faded into insignificance. Without realizing it he was preparing himself for Laura's failure to pass this test. To be sure, she had never given him cause to suspect her love. She had been throughout ten years of married life apparently a devoted wife, with no thoughts for other than him. Yet in his mind he told himself that the sending of the telegram to Maguire marked the beginning of the end of it all. A premonition of trouble that was actually a certainty to him darkened his days.

So convinced of it was he that he passed on subconsciously to the next phase. What then, when his suspicions had been confirmed, was he to do? The unfortunately few steps open to a wronged husband did not appeal to him. The idea of shooting

Laura or Maguire or both, and himself too, perhaps, passed through his musings with the speed of a hard-pressed cat. It was gone before he realized it had come. In retrospection its advantages eluded him. "I mustn't get dramatic about this thing," he told himself. Shooting them without then committing suicide meant either the electric chair or the penitentiary. And he had no intention at all of killing himself. What good was that?

Nor did the idea of thrashing Maguire strike him as feasible. Knocking Laura in the eye was not to be thought of. Both possibilities were quite silly, offering little satisfaction, no redress, and much difficulty. He discarded them almost as quickly as he had the lethal manner of winding up the situation in an honorable way.

The only considerable plan that occurred to him was for him to clear out, once the thing was settled definitely, leaving behind a good, strong note explaining all and delivering Laura to her lover. And even this was not completely satisfactory, as he did not want to leave Riverside. There was no telling how soon he could get into another Rotary Club.

Friday afternoon, when he and Laura went to the station in their neat little coupé to meet the guest, he was still in doubt as to what he should do.

IV

CARL was compelled to admit that Matty Maguire was a fine-looking man, and exceptionally well dressed. The ex-baseball player wore an enormous fur coat, a very hairy one, and an expensive-looking long-visored cap. His shoes were long and broad and of two colors of leather, brown at the bottom and black above. His socks were white with lavender clocks. His suit, when he threw open the great coat, was found to be a heather mixture of thick rough

tweed, with a narrow Norfolk belt about the coat and a narrower one about the vest. It fitted very snugly. His shirt and glistening collar were a gray blue. Nobody in Riverside could match any of these garments.

Presented so splendidly to him, Carl could have liked Maguire, under other circumstances. But these circumstances he could not forget. Laura did not permit him to. She sprang forward, when Matty stepped from the train, and grasped his great strong right hand in both of hers, eagerness and delight written on her face. Maguire noticed it.

"I got a good mind to kiss you," he exclaimed, and then looked at her husband. "So this is Carl, eh, the lucky bum! Put 'er there, Carl, you got one reg'lar little queen, I'm here to tell you, boy. Pretty late for congrats, but here they are, all the same."

He noticeably did not congratulate Laura.

The spirit, though, in which the big fellow grasped the situation and his frank and tactful way of expressing himself pleased Carl. He regretted, for a moment, that his wife was destined to be unfaithful with Maguire.

Laura was boldly appraising her foreordained polluter. She noted affectionately that he still sweated, even though it was January.

"The same old sweat," she murmured to herself.

But he had given up chewing tobacco. His mouth was clean at the corners. Noticing her look, he grinned broadly, opened his mouth, and thrust out his tongue. Balanced on it was a ten-cent wad of gum.

"No more spittin'," he said cheerfully, and Laura patted him fondly on the arm.

"Spit if you wish, dear," she whispered. "Nobody is going to stop you."

Relieved, he spat.

On the way home in the neat little coupé Carl found what his place was going to be in the arrangement. It was as he had feared, only worse; he

was incontrovertibly an outsider. Matty met each of his attempts to join in the conversation with a one- or two-word reply that was virtually a dismissal. He accepted all the invitations to dinner which Carl had for him with an all-embracing "Yes." He ruled out baseball as a subject of conversation with a gesture that put it away forever. By the time they reached the house, Carl saw that he might as well have ridden home on the rear axle, for all the interest they had in him.

In the depth of depression, he put away the car and went straight to his room to wash up for dinner. When he came down, Laura and Matty had already started eating. He did not say a word during the meal, nor did they address him. Afterward he returned to his room and sat looking out of the window, brooding, sore in mind, as low in spirits as ever he had been.

"And she," he murmured once, "the wife of a Rotarian!"

He crawled wearily into bed, too feeble in resentment to care where Laura and Matty were or what they were doing. Very late, after midnight, she came to bed. He pretended that he was asleep. It was long, though, before he actually was.

He did not wake Laura when he rose. He glanced down at her, studied her tired, calm, pretty face, and tears came to his eyes. He kissed her gently, dressed quietly, and left the house.

The day at the store seemed long, longer than any he'd ever known. Laura did not call on the 'phone as she usually did. Nor did he go home for his midday meal. He ate at the Ralston Hotel, alone. A score or more of friends dropped into the store during the afternoon and asked about Matty Maguire, for Laura had advertised his coming well. Both papers had carried pictures of him, special stories of his prowess at the bat, and roguish accounts of his acquaintanceship with Laura Warner

Blanchard in Atlanta. Carl too was mentioned, "the Riverside Rotarian who had vanquished the great Matty Maguire on the field of love." He diffidently answered the inquiries, concealing his worry behind a somewhat incredible nonchalance. The sly digs about bringing an old rival into his home hurt, but he laughed carelessly and agreed that he had nerve, all right, all right.

Laura greeted him rather quietly in the evening, and Matty rather boisterously. Carl did not care. He was past that, it seemed. They ate dinner in comparative silence, and afterward they went to the Grand moving picture show, where Carl ignored the fact that Laura and Matty held hands. On the way out of the theatre a dozen business acquaintances came up to them to be introduced to the noted slugger. When presently they reached home, Carl went again straight to his room, brooded a while, and then went to bed without waiting for Laura.

The next day was the same, and the next and the next and the next.

Then gradually there came a change in Carl's feeling. Just as Laura and Matty grew less and less clandestine in their love making, so he became less and less apathetic to it. His temper stirred, moved, and began, slowly, to rise. It was not the fact of their love that provoked him into this growing resentment, but their maddening carelessness, their cool unconcern about him. The daring of their hand-holding, the openness of their kissing, their complete disregard of his presence, exasperated him. It was indecent of them, unworthy of Laura. He was, in fact, ashamed of her. He began to live in terror lest gossip be started. That would have been particularly perturbing in view of the early Rotary Club elections. So far, though, there appeared to be none.

It was about a week after Matty's arrival that Carl's temper, driven beyond endurance, boiled over. He had,

by that time, been reduced to the importance of a gold-fish in Laura's and Matty's lives. Patiently, because he could not think of exactly what to do, he held his peace. But in this case, which seemed to him an extremely flagrant occasion, he considered that he could do nothing less than speak to them, if he wished to retain his self-respect.

He reached home that afternoon in his usual mood, silent, a bit sullen, but contained. He was rather relieved at not finding them there. It offered him, he reflected, opportunity to think. Sitting on the veranda, he thought. He thought long into the night. He was scarcely aware of the passage of time. He thought of Laura and Matty and himself, and, occasionally, of the Rotary Club. He gave little time, though, to the Rotary Club. His future in that direction seemed dead. He could not imagine a cuckold as president of the Rotary Club of Riverside. The Club, he mused, would hardly stand for it.

At eleven o'clock he recalled with a start that it was getting late, and Laura and Matty had neither telephoned nor returned. He got up and walked around to the garage. The neat little coupé was gone. Pulling hard on his cigar he returned to the veranda. He thought furiously. At midnight, when he heard the city clock striking, he went upstairs and to bed. He tried to stay awake, and failed. He slept very soundly.

He awoke in the morning with a start. He had counted on it so little that he was not surprised to find that Laura had not come in. He reflected deeply as he dressed. By no way of figuring could he escape the fact that all the evidence was in. Unconsciously he was seeking an explanation, an excuse, but he found none. There seemed no way of avoiding it now, he would have to speak to them, especially if he wished to retain his self respect. He was glad there were no children.

He made a pot of coffee and drank

it all. Then he got the morning paper and read it through. At nine o'clock the neat little coupé rolled into the side driveway and Laura and Matty got out. They entered the house laughing, said "Good morning, Carl," and went on together back to the kitchen. He could hear them chatting and giggling.

Carl went to the 'phone and called up the store.

"I won't be in today," he said.

Then he went back to his room.

V

SLAY them? No. Horsewhip them? No. Submit, give them to each other and clear out? No. Alone with his problem he went over and over the field. Every road out, so it seemed to him, was, for one reason or another, closed. Without hesitation he rejected the three he had pondered before. He must open a new road. God knows, he reflected, the situation needs a new one.

Finally, his mind fairly clear on his new trail, he went to the door and called downstairs.

"Laura, dear."

Her reply floated back to him:

"Yes, Carl; what is it?"

He shivered slightly.

"Ask Matty if he would mind stepping up here a minute," he quavered.

Matty's voice responded:

"Betcha life, ol' fellow. Be with you in a minute."

Carl heard a smacking sound.

Then Matty appeared, smiling, affable, in high good spirits. Carl shut the door behind him.

"Matty," he began portentously, facing the ex-baseball player, who had seated himself, "you have been a good friend to Laura and me."

Matty began to sweat.

"Yes," Carl said, reflectively, "you have done little things which we appreciate, I no less than Laura, for what you do for Laura you do for me. I love my wife, Matty, love her more than nearly anything else on

earth. There is little that I wouldn't do for her. Now, it seems, an opportunity to prove it has come.

"I have watched Laura since you arrived. I have seen how things are. I am not blind. And what I have seen has torn my very heart out. I have seen her turn, as you may have noticed, from me to you. I have seen her efforts to control herself, her fight against what she regarded as neither honorable nor fair, and I respect and love her all the more for it. But there is a Fate, Matty, which governs these things without our aid, beyond our resistance. What must be, Matty, must be.

"I do not blame her. She fought the good fight and lost. More than that cannot be said. I understand, I appreciate what she has been through, her struggles, her agony, the discouraging odds which gradually overcame her."

"See here, now, old man . . ."

"No, Matty, let me finish." He began to pace the floor. "I appreciate her position. You, on one hand, are Matty Maguire, famous all over the country, a distinguished baseball player in your day and a highly respected magnate now. I, I am only a rough, unpolished merchant. In my way I suppose I am all right, fairly successful in my business, a member of the Rotary Club, and well thought of here in Riverside. But what is that? I am not Matty Maguire, I can never be.

"Matty, you must see it, it is you she wants, you she loves, not me. Look at it straight, man. You can't get around it. Laura no longer loves me, she loves you."

"Now look here, Carly old boy . . ."

"No, Matty, you can't deny it. I see it, whether you do or not." He stopped at the writing desk and fumbled at the drawer. "I suppose by rights I could kill you." He could practically hear Matty sweating. He finally got the drawer open. "Yes," he repeated, clawing around in the drawer, "I've certainly got the right.

However"—apparently he did not find what he seeking, for he shut the drawer—"I'm not. That, Matty, isn't the way gentlemen handle such matters." A thought caught him, and he halted suddenly. "You're not a Rotarian, are you?"

"No. . . . But look here . . ."

"I thought not," He resumed his pacing. "To get back, though, Laura loves you, Matty. And as I said, I'll do anything for her. This is my big opportunity, and I hope that I am meeting it in the right spirit. Matty, I invite you to remain in this house, be with us here, as long as you wish, as long as it pleases Laura. Laura wants it, Matty, and I sacrifice myself for her. That is the way I meet this opportunity. That is my decision. That is all."

Matty nearly stopped sweating. He breathed a sigh of relief.

"Carly old boy," he began.

"Matty, inasmuch as I am doing what I think will please Laura, the woman I love, I can only wish it were more." He reflected. "But I can't see how I can. No, I can't do more, unless you could stay longer. I only wish you could."

There was a silence as they both speculated on how Carl could do more. Slyly, warily, Carl stole a glance at the ball player, who was wrestling with a thought.

"By the way," he remarked casually, "where do the Blue Sox train this spring?"

"Macon," Matty replied absently.

"Well, now, Matty, I don't want to presume, but if you haven't signed any papers on it, why don't you bring them to Riverside. We have a swell park, ten minutes from the hotel, turtle-back infield, sodded outfield. We can arrange easy rates and a special cook for you and your men. We

have the finest weather in the South during March and April. Have you signed any papers for Macon yet?"

"No, I haven't," Matty exclaimed. "That's a damned good idea, Carl, and—and—"

"Mrs. Blanchard and I would be pleased," Carl bowed politely, "if you would be our guest while the team is in town. May we not count on it?"

A glint of understanding fought its way through Matty's mind. "We'll fix the papers up tomorrow, Carl. And I think you're a pretty square guy. I accept your and Mrs. Blanchard's invitation."

"The honor will be all mine."

VI

"AND finally, fellow Rotarians," concluded the retiring president, Sam White, "I pass from this office comforted with the knowledge that I leave it in better hands than mine. I think you will all agree with me when I say that no member of the Rotary Club of Riverside so richly deserved the honor of heading the organization next year as Rotarian Carl Blanchard. We might have suspected when he invited Matty Maguire to visit him that he had something more in mind than simply pleasing the lovely and charming Mrs. Blanchard (laughter and applause), and now we know he had. For the first time in the history of Riverside, gentlemen, a big league baseball team is to honor us with a visit, and not for one year only, mind you, but for five seasons. Mr. Maguire had just signed a contract to that effect.

"Gentlemen, I ask you to rise—Rotarians of Riverside, your new chief, Rotarian Carl Blanchard!"



Three Widows of Three Sailors

By G. William Breck

ONE night during a storm three sailors were drowned. The next morning their bodies were discovered on the beach. When the widows of the three sailors were told what had happened their grief was pitiful and they cried: "Let us go to our dead!" Then they put on mourning capes which were black outside and white inside and not unbecoming. The storm was over, and as they walked along the edge of the sea they saw coming toward them three men. They were young and handsome fellows who sang and laughed gaily.

The first widow said, "Let us hurry forward," and quickened her steps until she was in advance of the other two.

The second murmured, "How warm it is," and threw back her long cape over one shoulder. Her slim body was revealed.

The third looked wistfully out over the sparkling waters, but said nothing. Against the sky her profile was beautiful.

All that day and all the next day the bodies of the three sailors lay on the sands. Then another storm arose and their bodies were washed out to sea.



I See This Sweet Night Passing

By Thomas Moulton

IN the fields at Green Fern Farm the grass is aglow

With dew like daisies tipped by an April moon;

The shadows are heavy in laboring rows, they are deep:

They hide young violets that dappled the day below

Tall hedges of hawthorn, the shadows are hedges asleep.

. . . The moon is falling, the sweet night passes, and soon

The daisy-pale dew and the shadows will dwindle away,

And again the white wild violets dapple the day.

But a shadow is here that lies deeper, it will stay,

Even when the fields at Green Fern Farm bleach under the sun-brazen hours

That dry the last dews out of grass and fern

And the shadowless flowers,

Even then will that shadow linger, it will trouble the skies

And the earth for ever, for on my heart it lies.

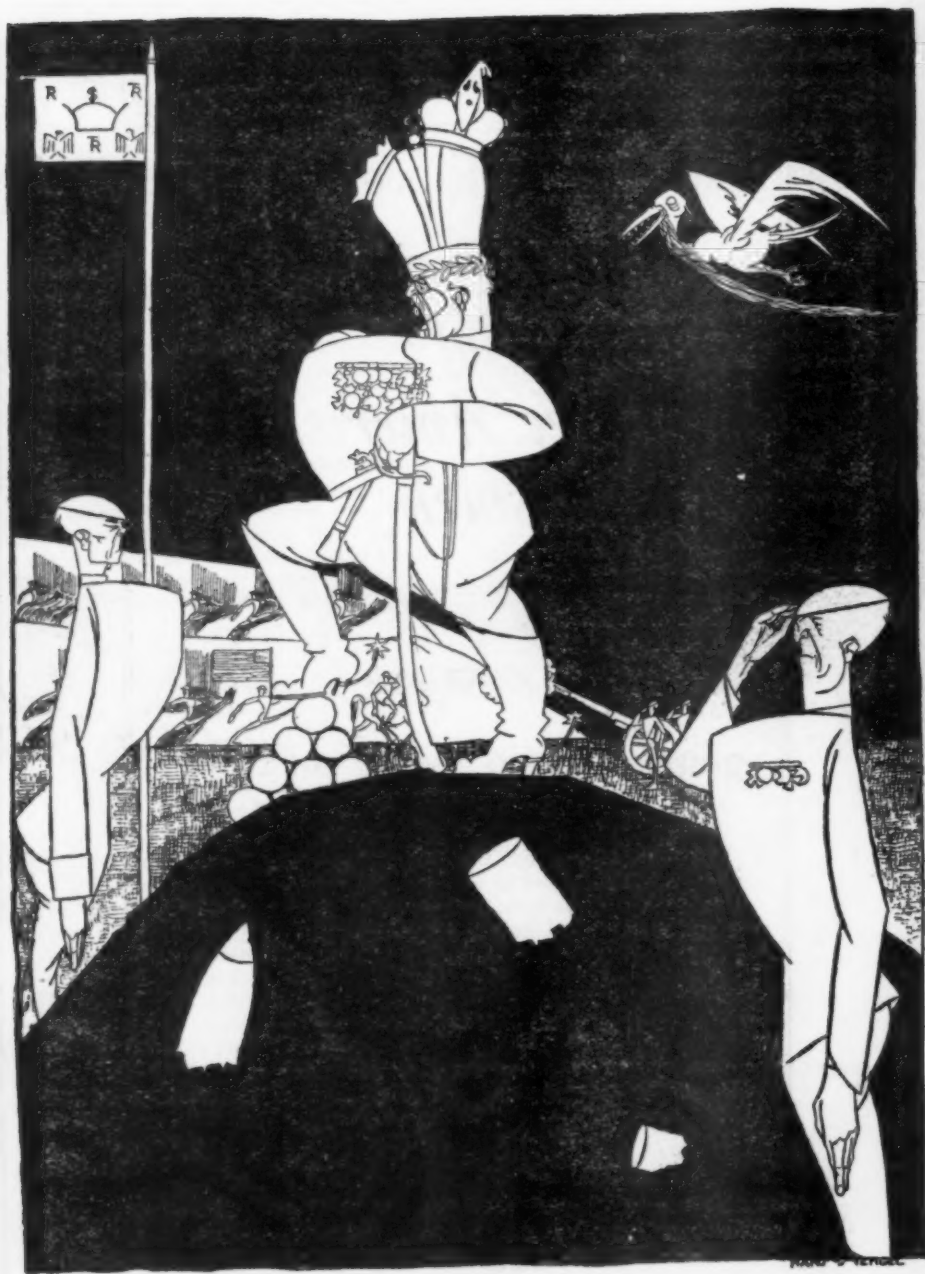
Already as I see this Spring night passing I say:

It is so beautiful,

It will never return.

*The Dreams
of
Three American
Statesmen*

*By
Stengel*



Roosevelt





Harding

The Bachelor

By F. Hugh Herbert

I

MEYER GOLDSTEIN was a bachelor. Until he was thirty-five people had spoken of him as being still single. Now that he was thirty-seven, however, and showed no signs of taking unto himself a wife they referred to him merely as a bachelor. And whenever they mentioned the word they said what a pity it was, because he would make such a wonderful husband for some nice girl.

He was the star boarder at Mrs. Lachmann's. None of her gentlemen had ever been with her as long as Meyer. Fifteen years ago he had come in answer to her advertisement (Rooms with board with refined Jewish family) and during those years he had graduated from the hall bedroom on the fourth floor, which he had occupied for the first two years, to the big room with bath on the first floor. Prior to the decease of her husband that was the room occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Lachmann. It was the finest room in the house. Mrs. Lachmann, who slept in the basement, often felt sad when she went into Meyer's room on some errand, and thought of the might-have-been. If only Mr. Lachmann had not invested so heavily in oil! But he *had* invested heavily in oil. Consequently Mrs. Lachmann and her two sisters, who constituted the refined Jewish family, were compelled to run a boarding house.

Meyer Goldstein was such a nice man. Everybody said so. And he was so amusing. Mrs. Lachmann used to say that he was as good as a show. Always telling jokes, always playing

tricks, you never knew what he would do next. And he had been doing that for fifteen years. Mrs. Lachmann often said that she found it difficult to realize that he was only a boarder. He had been there so long that he seemed like one of the family. And he was so kind. Why, he never forgot a birthday or an anniversary. It certainly did seem a pity that he was a bachelor. There was no doubt about it—he would have made a wonderful husband.

Meyer was rather short and heavily built, almost inclined to be fat. He had a large, amiable, colorless, round face, very much like a pale, full moon on a misty night. Such little hair as he still retained was carefully, lovingly, brushed back. He had excellent teeth, which he displayed constantly by a kindly, weak smile. His eyes were small and insignificant. His lips were large, pink and thick.

Meyer was a hard and conscientious worker. Nobody quite knew what he did, but he was understood to be the secretary, or something, to some concern or other that manufactured—what was it they manufactured? Mrs. Lachmann knew of course, but she couldn't think of it for the moment. Something to do with bathroom fittings, she thought. Or was it steam gauges for furnaces? Anyway he had a very good position. His employers thought very highly of him.

Meyer came from Alabama. His father still lived there, and once a year Meyer took a vacation and visited him. He was very good to his father. Mrs. Lachmann used to say that they thought the world of him down in Alabama.

Meyer usually took his vacation in July. He began to make plans for it in May. There were so many things to do, and Meyer liked everything to be just so. He hated to rush things. There was a new suit to order, for instance. Meyer used to bring the patterns home and ask Mrs. Lachmann's advice about it. All the guests were invited to give their opinion. Of course, blue was nice, but then his last year's spring suit was blue. Still you were always safe with blue. It didn't show the dirt, and it certainly looked good on him. Maybe he ought to stick to blue. One was always safe with blue. Meyer began to smile.

"I knew a man who blew up a safe," he said, "but I'm going to be safe with blue."

He was always saying screamingly funny things like that.

Mrs. Lachmann often used to say that she had never seen such a tidy man as Meyer.

"His room is wonderful—so spick and span—like a jewel box." Really, he gave less trouble than any of the other men in the house.

"Now *your* room, Milton," said Mrs. Lachmann, addressing young Mr. Schwartz—she always liked to call her guests by their first names—"your room is always in a terrible mess. Why aren't you nice and tidy like Meyer?"

Meyer liked such compliments. He was very proud of his tidiness.

"I have to keep my desk tidy—why not my room?" he used to say. It seemed very logical.

Meyer had no relatives in New York, but he had hosts of friends, and three nights a week he had standing invitations. He dressed with the same scrupulous care for these evenings as he would have done for a funeral or a wedding. Dressing was a pleasure to Meyer. He had so many shirts to choose from, it was always quite a problem. He must have had at least two dozen. He used to buy them singly, as a woman buys bargains, and he always showed his purchases to Mrs. Lachmann and to all the guests. It was the same with ties—he had dozens

of those, too. And stick-pins—he spent a lot of money on those. Mrs. Heinemann, one of the guests, thought he spent too much.

"Why, nonsense, Rosie," said Mrs. Lachmann, "Meyer probably makes all of eighty dollars a week and he has nothing to spend it on—why shouldn't he buy himself a nice stickpin? He can well afford it."

"But he already has three," objected Mrs. Heinemann.

"Well it's better to spend it on a stick-pin than the way some young men do, isn't it?"

There was no getting away from that. It was undoubtedly better.

Meyer knew a lot of nice girls and often took them out in the evening. Mrs. Lachmann used to say that they were lucky girls to have such an escort, because Meyer certainly knew how to entertain. There was nothing small about him. Of course, to get down to Times Square from 140th Street, it was quicker to go by Subway, but he always took a taxi from the Subway to the theatre if it was only five or six blocks.

"It really is too bad that Meyer never found a girl to suit him," she used to say. "It isn't that he doesn't like girls—I suppose it's just because he never found Miss Right. And as Meyer always tells us," she said smiling, "if a man doesn't find Miss Right he gets left." And it really was too bad, because Meyer knew a lot of nice girls.

He also knew quite a number of girls who were not nice, but Mrs. Lachmann never knew that. She wouldn't have believed it if you had told her. If Meyer had been found with a woman in his room in her own house, she wouldn't have believed it. She thought him incapable of such nastiness.

But the other men in the house knew all about them. Meyer aired the minutest details of his affairs with the same ingenuous pleasure with which he exhibited his latest shirt. There was never exactly a *grand passion*—just a series of more or less sordid intrigues, mostly with Gentile girls. By some

process of reasoning this seemed to Meyer a redeeming feature. Not that he felt sorely in need of redemption. On the contrary, he was not a little proud of his successes.

Meyer was perfectly content with life. For fifteen years he had lived in the same boarding house. He had seen dozens of young men and young women come and go, he had seen many of them marry and have their own homes, and he used to visit those homes, and never felt the slightest pang of envy. Certainly it was nice to have a charming little home, and a pretty little wife, and maybe a cunning little baby—but it involved a lot of trouble and a lot of expense. Meyer had no worries. The price of coal might fluctuate wildly, the difficulty of obtaining and keeping reliable help might increase day by day, rents might go up—in fact all these things did happen, and it made no difference to Meyer. Every Saturday he gave Mrs. Lachmann a check for thirty-two dollars, year in and year out, and that was all the worry he had. As he very shrewdly said to himself, he would be a darn fool to marry. Outwardly, however, he ascribed his bachelorhood to the failure of Miss Right to materialize.

Milton Schwartz used to argue with him on the subject. Milton was saving up to get married. He was a sentimental, enthusiastic young man, and he couldn't understand Meyer at all.

"I want to marry as quick as I darn well can," he said. "Boarding houses, even a nice one like this, give me a pain! I want my own home and my own wife. Who cares if I'm sick here? Nobody! Who cares if I'm happy or sad? Nobody! I want somebody to share my sorrows, to share my joys, to share my home—"

"To share your money—" suggested Meyer.

"Well, of course," said Milton honestly.

"Aha," said Meyer, slyly, "aha—aha—"

Nevertheless, he realized acutely that there was something to what Milton

said. It *would* be rather nice to go home every evening with the comfortable reflection that you would find a woman waiting for you. Much nicer than to have to go out, as he did from time to time, in order to find the woman. That, he reflected, was how he had caught that troublesome cold of his—leaving a nice warm apartment and going home. Maybe it would be more comfortable and cheaper to marry. He permitted himself to toy with the notion occasionally.

II

MEYER GOLDSTEIN was in his thirty-eighth year when Ruth Fertig came to live at Mrs. Lachmann's. Ruth was a cousin of Rosie Heinemann—you had to be a relative or an intimate friend of some guest before Mrs. Lachmann would take you. Nobody knew for certain how old Ruth actually was, but she was believed to be about thirty-two. She was a large, dark, voluptuous looking girl, with a very loud voice and a laugh that could be heard for two blocks. She wore earrings, and had bobbed, straight, rather greasy-looking hair, and she affected clothes of a somewhat exotic nature. She gave piano lessons and was in great demand by mothers who cherished musical ambitions for their young, because she was reputed to be perfectly wonderful with children.

Before long she had been accepted as one of Mrs. Lachmann's happy family, and was known to all as Ruth. From the very first she and Meyer got along splendidly. At dinner, when Meyer repeated the jokes from the comic strips in the evening papers, her laughter was always the loudest and the longest. When Meyer asked her not to go out one evening because that would make him "Ruth-less," she replied, quick as a flash, that she "ad-Meyer-d" that quality in men very much. Mrs. Lachmann was delighted at their growing intimacy. She liked Ruth immensely, and Meyer had actually been with her so long, that her kindly heart

was full of affection for him. She thought they would be ideally suited, and did everything to foster a match.

She was nobly seconded in this by Ruth herself, who had determined that she was the Miss Right of whom Meyer sometimes spoke. Meyer first began to feel faintly alarmed when he discovered one day that Ruth was doing his mending. He had been in the habit of paying Flora, the chambermaid, fifty cents a week for this service. It was with quite a shock, therefore, that he recognized one of his socks as Ruth sat sewing in the parlor one evening.

"I told Mrs. Lachmann I'd like to do it," Ruth protested. "Flora was very busy and I had nothing to do at all. You don't mind, do you?"

After that, of course, there was nothing for him to do but to turn it off with a joke.

"Of course I can't pay you as much as I pay Flora," said Meyer, "because she was experienced. What are your rates for needlework?"

"I work for love" said Ruth, rather too pointedly. Meyer changed the subject somewhat hurriedly.

Ruth had the room next to Meyer's, and they were the objects of much good-natured, if ponderous humor because there was a communicating door.

As a matter of fact Meyer often used to look at that door as he undressed and got into bed. Ruth was a fine girl, there was no doubt about that. And further, she seemed to be very much attracted by him. Mrs. Lachmann and Mrs. Heinemann had told him so on several occasions. Not that he needed their assurance. Ruth showed it pretty plainly. As the weeks went by, and another winter dissolved before another spring, Meyer found himself looking at that door more than ever. It began to exert a strange fascination over him.

One night he took Ruth to the movies. Often a bunch of Mrs. Lachmann's guests would stroll over to Broadway together and go to the movies or to a vaudeville show, but this was the first

time Meyer and Ruth had been alone. He had asked five or six people, but nobody could go except Ruth, and by then it was too late to step back. So Meyer took Ruth, and Ruth saw to it that they held hands. Meyer wasn't eager, but he could hardly decline when Ruth more or less took the initiative.

It was quite agreeable, for that matter, and when Ruth snuggled up to him, as much as a girl weighing 160 pounds can snuggle, he was pleasantly thrilled.

He began to consider the possibility of matrimony quite seriously once more. He was earning four thousand dollars a year, and he had about fifteen thousand saved. He could well afford it. Milton Schwartz was going to get married on a paltry forty-five dollars a week. Of course, he was comfortable enough at Mrs. Lachmann's, in fact he looked upon it as his home, but nevertheless it *wasn't* his home. Ruth was a domesticated girl. She had been at pains to demonstrate her cooking. Only last Sunday she had made a wonderful lemon meringue pie for Mrs. Lachmann. Meyer had been awfully funny about that pie. "Tell father my last thoughts were of him," he had said before he began to eat it. Ruth yelled with laughter. But he had been forced to admit that it was a good pie.

Meyer was very fond of his food. Mrs. Lachmann's table was wonderful, but at times he felt it was a little monotonous. Meyer liked expensive, out-of-season dishes. He often walked as far as seven blocks to partake of some favorite dish if he knew that it was available at some restaurant. Well, if he married, he could have all these in his home. Ruth, he felt sure, would be a wonderful manager. Four thousand a year—surely that was plenty. The more Meyer thought about it, the more the idea appealed to him.

Naturally he would have to cut out all his present love affairs. There was the little shop girl in Hoboken whom he visited about twice a month; she

was very cute—Meyer hated the thought of cutting her out. And there was the girl who had been his stenographer, and who now had a very pretty little apartment in 45th Street. Meyer was quite fond of her. Every time he entertained her it set him back about forty or fifty dollars, one way or the other. It was expensive, of course, but it was worth it. She certainly was a peach of a girl.

And then, something that Ruth had said, set Meyer to thinking. "I think husband and wife ought to allow each other a lot of latitude," she had maintained once in a general discussion. Latitude. That admitted of a pretty free interpretation Meyer thought. Maybe it would not be necessary to cut out both the shop girl and the former stenographer. Four thousand dollars a year—it ought to be plenty for everything.

As he prepared for bed that night Meyer could not keep his eyes from that communicating door. Now if he were already married the door wouldn't be bolted and he could walk right in. . . . Meyer lay awake for some time, thinking.

In the next room Ruth also gave herself up to thought. She felt that she had Meyer going and she was searching her brains for the best and most expedient means of bringing the matter to the eminently desirable climax of matrimony.

Ruth was not in love with Meyer in any romantic or sentimental way. But she was tired of giving piano lessons and very anxious to be married and Meyer seemed the logical husband. Ruth had no illusions about herself or about Meyer. She knew herself for a girl on the verge of becoming an old maid and this she desired to avoid above all things. She knew herself to be good looking in a heavy, rather bovine way, and she knew that she wielded a very positive attraction over Meyer. As for Meyer, she knew of course, that his one great fault was that he was utterly and completely selfish. The only person who had played

any consistently important part in Meyer's life so far was Meyer. The only person who interested Meyer was Meyer. Ruth felt confident that she could alter that. Meanwhile it was necessary to paint the beautiful prospects of matrimony to him in the most glowing colors. She pondered over the problem for hours.

III

SEVERAL days later the opportunity presented itself. Ruth and Meyer had been to the movies again, and were eating a sandwich in one of those glorified delicatessen stores calling themselves something-or-Other-Inn, which sprout along upper Broadway. They charge exorbitant prices for quite indifferent refreshments, and are invariably crowded to the doors, being one further proof of the universal truth of Barnum's hackneyed dictum. A casual glance over the patrons any night will further show you that not less than 90 per cent of them are of the chosen race.

Ruth always left the ordering to Meyer, and Meyer, after studying the long list of exotically named sandwiches, had chosen two tomato surprises (85 cents each). He might have known better. They never are a surprise. They always consist of tomato and chicken salad, with the inevitable slice of dill pickle draped along the edge.

Suddenly, as Ruth was eating this confection, her large, amiable mouth remained wide open, and her large, greenish eyes almost popped out of their sockets.

"For Heaven's sake," she cried, "there's Amy Silverberg! I haven't seen her for years!"

Meyer turned round to where Ruth indicated, and saw a small, indeterminate little blonde, in a sealskin coat, wildly waving a fork in their direction.

"Come on over," Ruth yelled above the clatter of cutlery and crockery.

So the blonde rose and came toward them accompanied by a cheerful looking young man in a derby hat.

Followed hectic but immensely cheerful introductions, while Ruth and Amy clung to each other affectionately and never ceased to chatter. Amy, it appeared, had been married but four months, and she presented her husband, Sidney Buxbaum, the cheerful young man. Yes, it had been quite sudden, but Sidney couldn't wait. "Could you, Sid?" inquired the recent bride.

"I should say not," replied the husband enthusiastically.

And was Ruth married yet, Amy desired to know? Ruth confessed that she was still single. Amy thought that that was too bad. She had thought for a moment—it was funny how one had these ideas, wasn't it?—she had really thought for a moment when she saw Ruth with a man, that perhaps Ruth had gone and done precisely as she herself had done!

"Why no!" said Ruth, "the idea! Meyer and I are just good friends, aren't we, Meyer? We live in the same house," she explained.

"So do quite a number of husbands and wives," said Sidney, who was also a humorist in his little way. "We live in the same room," he went on.

"Attaboy!" said Meyer, appreciatively.

They had a very pleasant visit together. Meyer, expanding under the stimulus of a new audience, told his best story about the drummer and the Pullman conductor and was rewarded with a burst of laughter that rattled the cups on the table. Ruth, who had heard the story not less than five times, laughed the loudest.

"Tell them the one about the old sailor in the drug store," she urged.

Meyer told it and Amy almost had hysterics. Sidney told a good one too, about a nigger and some watermelons. That reminded Meyer of the trick with the seven matches.

"Oh, yes—that one—it's so clever," said Ruth.

Afterward there was the usual friendly wrangle about the check, and finally they matched for it. Sidney paid.

"You must come over and visit us," Amy insisted, as she kissed Ruth affectionately on parting. "Come over one day next week and bring Mr. Goldstein—if he would care to come."

Meyer professed himself delighted.

"I don't like vague dates," said Sidney, "nobody ever keeps 'em. Make it definite—how about Tuesday? Tuesday would be best, because we have a radio set and there's a peach of a program. How about it?"

And so they agreed upon Tuesday, and after further demonstrative farewells, Meyer and Ruth went home.

"You can't imagine what a difference there is in Amy," said Ruth. "She looks so happy! Last time I saw her she was teaching piano like I do, and she was discontented and her complexion was terrible! Now she's positively radiant! Marriage certainly seems to agree with her."

Ruth, during the following days, was delighted at the prospect of her visit. She felt sure that when Meyer saw the connubial bliss of the happily married Buxbaums in their cosy apartment, he would appreciate more keenly all the happiness that he was missing. If Amy, who was not half so good looking as Ruth, and Sidney, who probably earned far less than Meyer, could be so blissfully united, she argued that Meyer, who was shrewd enough to appreciate these facts, would feel within him an irresistible urge to go and do likewise.

She enlisted the active co-operation of Mrs. Lachmann. On the night before their projected visit, Meyer, as frequently happened on a Monday, was very late for dinner. Mrs. Lachmann had always kept his meal hot for him. On this occasion, at Ruth's earnest request, she did not keep it hot. She didn't even keep it at all. Meyer came in, later than usual as a matter of fact, and found no dinner. He was amazed. Such a thing had never happened in the fifteen years of his residence. At first he thought they were kidding him. But presently it dawned upon him that Mrs. Lachmann had actually permitted him

to go dinnerless. She was very sweet and reasonable about it.

"You see, Meyer, you were later than usual, and I *must* think of the servants. I can't afford to lose them. They refuse to work after a certain hour. You know I'd do anything for you, but you must remember, this isn't like your own home."

Meyer went up to bed early, after a short talk with Ruth, during which she had been very sympathetic. She had some crackers in her room and some peanut butter. Would Meyer like some? She'd run up and fix him some in a minute if he would let her? It was mighty sweet of Ruth to trouble. Ruth assured him it was no trouble at all. She loved to do little things like that for her friends. After all, that was what a girl was for, wasn't it?

Meyer lay awake for hours, thinking. He was indignant with Mrs. Lachmann, but he was honest enough to be able to see her point of view. It *wasn't* like his own home—she was absolutely right about that. And it was really mighty sweet of Ruth to fix him those crackers. . . . Now if he were married, and had his own home, there would be no question about keeping his meals for him. He would have the right to expect it. That was what a wife was for, wasn't it?

IV

THE following evening Meyer and Ruth visited the Buxbaums. Ruth was a little disappointed when she saw the exterior of the house. She had thought it would be one of those beautiful apartment houses near Central Park West. Instead it was a rather dilapidated red brick house between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. In front, swarms of very noisy and very dirty children quarreled over some complicated game. Meyer had to strike a match inside the outer door to find out which of the sixteen bells communicated with the Buxbaums' apartment. It seemed a very small house to hold sixteen families. The lock began to

click violently in answer to the bell, and they entered the house.

It was very dimly lit, and there was a heavy, almost tangible smell of boiled cabbage, which seemed to permeate the moist, musty atmosphere.

They began to climb the stairs. By craning back his neck, Meyer could discern Amy's face peering over the banisters at what seemed an incredible height, and her shrill, cheerful voice urged them on with cries of "only two more flights, folks!"

Finally, both rather breathless, they entered the Buxbaums' apartment.

It consisted of one fair sized room, crowded with more furniture and miscellaneous rubbish than Meyer had ever seen within so small a space.

As you came in, the first thing that struck you, metaphorically as a rule, but physically also unless you were careful, was an immense brass bed. Meyer had never seen so enormous a bed. In that small, overcrowded room, it seemed to him gigantic. Also, in view of the fact that Amy and Sidney were newly married, it seemed to him to verge on the indelicate. They might at least have had a day bed, he thought. The bed made such an impression on him that he stood looking at it as in a trance, until the laughter of the others aroused him.

Two feet from the end of the bed was an upright piano. They just had to have a piano, Amy explained, because Sidney loved to hear her play.

"Don't you, Sid?" said Amy, affectionately.

"I'll tell the world," said Sidney, as he embraced her boisterously, putting his arms about her completely.

"Nice old sweetie," murmured Amy, as she playfully bit his ear.

Meyer wished that they would not be so demonstrative.

"Look at them—aren't they adorable?" gushed Ruth.

Meyer squeezed carefully between the bed and the piano, and examined the radio set, which stood on a table by the window, rendering access to the win-

dow quite impossible without tripping over innumerable wires.

"Let's all sit down and listen to the radio," suggested Amy, "and visit afterwards. There's a wonderful quartette coming from W. O. R."

She swept a heap of newspapers from a rocker and invited Meyer to be seated, giving him a set of headphones. Ruth perched on the piano, while Amy and Sidney sat on the edge of the bed. The latter leaned over and adjusted the radio.

While they waited for Sidney to get into touch with W. O. R., Meyer took a careful survey of the room.

Behind the piano there was a wash-basin full of dirty dishes, and a gas cooker. These conveniences, being set in a species of alcove, he supposed they constituted a kitchenette. He presumed the half open door on his left led to the bathroom.

The walls were crowded with innumerable photographs, none of which seemed to have been taken within the last decade, to judge by their jaundiced tint. Amy, noting Meyer's attention, told him they were Sidney's folks.

The piano was piled high with books, music, boxes of candy, tea cups and ash trays. At one end there was a reading lamp, very obviously a wedding present, and, strangely enough, a pair of Sidney's socks were draped over this. Probably Amy had been mending them when Meyer and Ruth had come. A chiffonier and a dressing table, both crowded with brushes, bottles and other toilet paraphernalia, completed the furniture of the room. It was all very cosy, and intimate and untidy.

Meyer looked on with an expression of profound disappointment, which was not decreased when the promised quartette from W O R was overwhelmed by a loud and insistent voice declaiming statistics of the oat crop in Iowa. Ruth, watching Meyer, began to feel a little uneasy.

But Sidney seemed perfectly happy, and Amy was continually radiant. They seemed to glory in the delightful intimacy of their relationship. They

referred to it continually. They had failed to get W O R and were visiting now.

"You've no idea what trouble I have waking this husband of mine every morning," said Amy rapturously. "I shake him, I shout at him, I kick him, I tickle him, I pull the clothes off him—he's terribly hard to wake—aren't you, Sid?"

"And this wife of mine," countered Sidney, "she's the clumsiest thing! I practically dress and undress her—she can't do up a button, or tie a bow."

"Isn't he terrible?" Amy beamed, "just because my hands were almost frozen one morning and I asked him to hook a dress." She rumbled her husband's hair happily.

Meyer sat in silence, brooding. So this was marriage! An overcrowded room, with wedding presents cluttering the floor, and piled high in every corner. Of course it had its compensations. . . . Yes, these were compensations. . . . Were they worth it—that was the question?

They left early, but not before Amy had insisted upon serving coffee and cake. The percolator was under the bed and the cake in the bottom drawer of the chiffonier—it wouldn't take a moment. It only took forty-five minutes.

As they walked home Ruth talked incessantly of Amy and Sidney. They seemed so happy, so wrapped up in each other, didn't they? It was lovely to see people so happy, wasn't it? Sidney earned fifty dollars a week, so Amy had told her, and next year he would get seventy-five. They would need the extra twenty-five, too, because Amy had whispered that an addition to the family might be expected. Wasn't that wonderful? Couldn't he imagine how they would worship that baby, being as crazy about each other as they were? She thought Amy was the happiest and the luckiest girl in the world, didn't he? Meyer guessed she was right, and went up to his room after the briefest of good nights.

V

He undressed slowly and carefully, folding each garment with his usual care. As he hung them up in the closet, he surveyed his extensive wardrobe with approval. Eight suits, not counting his evening clothes, and none of them more than three years old. They showed perfect taste, he considered. They had set him back a pretty sum too, but he did not grudge that. A man had to be well dressed.

He selected a shirt for the morrow, and transferred his studs and cuff buttons. He always did that the previous night. It gave him an extra five minutes in bed after he was called in the mornings.

He looked at the communicating door. He could hear Ruth moving about in her room. For the first time he went over to the door and deliberately put his ear to it, listening for the slightest sound. He could hear a vague swishing and swirling of fabrics, that might have been made by some garment being discarded, but on the other hand might have been born of his imagination. What was that Buxbaum had said, "I practically dress and undress her every day. . . ." Well, that was a husband's privi-

lege. . . . Now, if he was married to Ruth. . . .

He turned and examined his room. It was half as large again as the Buxbaums', and far more comfortable. Also it was scrupulously tidy. Meyer had a passion for tidiness. He saw the neat row of suits hanging in his closet, the four stickpins in their little pin-cushion on his dresser, the orderly piles of shirts in his drawers. Matrimony would involve the sacrifice of some of these. There might be no regular spring suit and fall suit if he had a wife to support.

On the other hand there would be somebody to love him, honor him and obey him. Somebody to keep dinner for him, somebody to put the studs in his shirt, somebody to share his sorrows, his joys, his home. That was what he had told Milton Schwartz himself. Was it worth the sacrifice?

"I guess not," said Meyer, comfortably as he turned out the light. After all, there was always the little girl in Hoboken.

In the next room Ruth bit her lip in anger.

"Why on earth didn't she tell me they lived like pigs!" she thought, fiercely, as she fought back the tears.



A GLASS of Tokay is delicious to sip, but one does not remember it the day after tomorrow. So it should be with women.



WHEN a man is disappointed in love, he remains a bachelor. A woman gets married.



A WOMAN laughs too late. A man too soon.



Casus Belli

By Wayne Saunders

EFFORTS to abolish war contain, to my mind, about as much chance of success as efforts to abolish violations of No. 7. Both are grounded in essential human needs far too deeply and profoundly ingrained ever to be materially altered by any such mechanical concoction of systematic propaganda as the reformers characteristically sponsor. Both are too instinctive, too spontaneous, too inevitable.

Just when extra-legal love will cease to occupy its present high status as the world's favorite sin I do not know. But I am rather sanguine about the conviction that war will end when man becomes sufficiently civilized for the tinsel emotionalism of patriotism to have no chasm for him—and not one moment before. So long as his heart misses a beat when the band plays "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and remains stoically indifferent when it plays Mozart's "Magic Flute" Overture—just so long will he, upon the slightest provocation, take up arms and proceed to the merry business of self-extinction.

I hold no brief against war—as war. I do not think it matters a great deal in the long run whether a million morons are fed into the voracious maws of cannon. As a matter of indisputable fact, there are far too many people in the world as it is, for comfort. Until a better means of regulating the supply is found, war will remain fairly efficient and, in its way, not a little praiseworthy. A messy way, I admit—but please do not sneer at Nature's methods until we have something better to offer. She has a way of reserving the last laugh that is frankly quite disconcerting. . . . Birth-control, of course. . . . But do not

overlook the fact that the very zanies who scream loudest and jump highest when the grand old flag goes by are sure to protest most vehemently and to make the holiest eyes when a civilized woman attempts to deliver a lecture on the possibility of putting the damper on the good but somewhat obtuse Jehovah's apparent intention to make his next circumterrestrial inundation one of babies.

No; war—as war—is not to be lightly dismissed. In its way it is fully as essential, if not fully as efficient, as the safety razor. The great evil of war is its indiscriminacy—or, where it does discriminate, its inveterate habit of playing the utter and confirmed damned fool. I have mentioned the indifference with which the loss in the long run of a million odd morons may be regarded. But most assuredly it does matter a great deal if even one Beethoven or Nietzsche, potential or actual, is fed into the jaws of cannon so admirably adapted for the consumption of morons. And, curiously enough, war manages to weed out the former and spare the morons—possibly because when, in the midst of the fray, and with death staring them straight in the face, the superior man, to whom flag-waving comes next in obnoxiousness to the verse of Alexander Pope, is apt to face it with a broad smile, and on the charge; and the moron, who maintains over his bedroom mantelpiece a lithograph of Abe Lincoln with a miniature flag carved in each corner of the frame, in a cold sweat and on the retreat.

But right or wrong, good or bad, it appears that war will be with us just so long as the voice of the people, which

is the voice of God, demands it. And the good people will demand it just so long as the low state of their culture compresses their souls into the narrow molds they now occupy, making them, as it does, first-rate incubators of international and inter-racial antipathy. I am thoroughly convinced that the higher a man ascends in the cultural scale the less patriotic he must of necessity become, the less he must of necessity *belong* to any one country. The greatest men certainly had and have none of the silly, puerile illusions about their native land which is the very warp and woof of conventional patriotism.

Hate between France and Germany has long been so prevalent and obvious as to make the mere mention of it platitudinous, and yet I do not believe for a moment that any really worth-while German has ever found it in his soul to rise to a hate of any Frenchman—as Frenchman—whatsoever, and, of course, vice versa. The man of true culture knows no national boundaries; all men are for him either potentially æsthetic or not; no other distinction is either desirable or feasible. The fact that one country is called England, another France, and another Germany means nothing whatever to him beyond the realization that such distinctions tend in a measure to keep alive and kicking certain racial and national cultural attributes which might, with greater intermingling of peoples, be inextricably entangled, hopelessly confused, indistinguishably merged, irretrievably lost. The English Channel emphasizes the musical German and the literary Englishman. God save the English Channel! . . .

It is most common in these most common days to accuse the diplomatic system of starting wars. I do not believe that statesmen primarily play any appreciable part in the making of wars at all. Such instances as that of the minds of the German and French mob being gradually and systematically incensed to war by clever diplomatic suggestion, even if valid, are too greatly the exception to matter. Certainly no

sane statesman would dare risk his reputation by counselling a war to a people who were not ready for it. The business of statesmen—and well they know it—is simply to feel the public pulse, and when it is ripe for a war, why, to give it one. The great and sovereign people contract the war fever by just as definite degrees as they contract, say, the reform fever, or the religious-revival fever, or the moving-picture fever, or the peace fever. (I doubt if there has ever in the entire history of the world been a people more fundamentally and thoroughly sick of war than these United States at this moment. And yet but four puny years ago the erstwhile divine Woodrow was being flayed from Hollywood to Rockaway Beach for his procrastinative measures.)

You may insist that statesmen do, after all, act as the immediate precipitators of the conflict. Which proves no more than the fact that a spark plug is the immediate precipitator of locomotion to a Ford proves that therefore the spark plug is a gasoline engine. True enough, one must have a spark plug; but still more true enough, one must have a locomotive mechanism and a supply of fuel. And, after all, you know, spark plugs are but highly efficient and convenient types of matches. . . . No; wars are not primarily the product of diplomatic chicanery; wars are the culmination of more or less protracted periods of that extremely narrow and individual nationalistic self-laudation which is at the very core of patriotism, and which can be engendered only in a soul to whom real culture—a valid æsthetic sense—is as foreign as Kant's theory of the categorical imperative.

Based upon such conclusions, we should be able to make a fair estimate as to how long it will be before wars will actually cease—before the people, that is, will attain to a sufficiently high degree of culture so that patriotism will be dissolved and armed belligerency lose its present naïve and irresistible, if periodic, charm—how long, in fine, before

the people as a whole become thoroughly civilized.

But I always made it a point in my school days (after having become familiar with the life of Thomas Gray) to be conspicuously rotten in that strange

affair men call arithmetic, and before figures so prodigiously appalling as those the above proposition augurs I am compelled to call upon your imagination—which, regardless of how far it goes, cannot well go too far.



Vagrant

By Babette Deutsch

I HAVE had beauty for my strange companion.
While like proud horses in a shining race
Hour fled past hour toward the posts of twilight,—
I watched their windy gallop in her face.

I have seen beauty in a room at evening,
Moving among the voiceless furniture
Like music, till all curves were as her bosom,
And every color eloquent of her.

Have I not known her body like a lover,
Who held her close in peacock-tinctured shawls,
Who warmed her sullen limbs with golden candles,
And knew her in their shadow on the walls?

Have I not found her, the beloved alien,
And lost her, the far-sought, eternal bride,
Seeing I know her for no man's possessing,
Cold as the wind, escaping like the tide?



YOU can tell a man's character, breeding and culture by the way he negotiates the barriers a woman sets up against him.



HISTORY—The march of men and events that fixes the dates of holidays.



Too Bad

By Dorothy Parker

I

"MY dear," Mrs. Marshall said to Mrs. Ames, "I never was so surprised in my life. Never in my life. Why, Grace and I were like that—just like *that*."

She held up her right hand, the upstanding first and second fingers rigidly close together, in illustration.

Mrs. Ames shook her head sadly, and offered the cinnamon toast.

"Imagine!" said Mrs. Marshall, refusing it, though with a longing eye. "We were going to have dinner with them last Tuesday night, and then I got this letter from Grace from this little place up in Connecticut, saying she was going to be up there she didn't know how long, and she thought, when she came back, she'd probably take just one big room with a kitchenette. Ernest was living at the Athletic Club, she said."

"But what did they do about their apartment?" Mrs. Ames' voice was high with anxiety.

"Why, it seems his sister took it, furnished and all—by the way, remind me, I must go and see her," said Mrs. Marshall. "They wanted to move into town, anyway, and they were looking for a place."

"Doesn't she feel terribly about it—his sister?" asked Mrs. Ames.

"Oh—terribly," Mrs. Marshall dismissed the word as inadequate. "My dear, think how everybody that knew them feels. Think how I feel. I don't know when I've had a thing depress me more. If it had been anybody but the Weldons!"

Mrs. Ames nodded.

"That's what I said," she retorted.

"That's what everybody says."

Mrs. Marshall quickly took away any undeserved credit. "To think of the Weldons separating! Why, I always used to say to Jim, 'Well, there's one happily married couple, anyway,' I used to say, 'so congenial, and with that nice apartment, and all.' And then, right out of a clear sky, they go and separate. I simply can't understand what on earth made them do it. It just seems too awful!"

Again Mrs. Ames nodded, slowly and sadly.

"Yes, it always seems too bad, a thing like that does," she said. "It's too bad."

II

MRS. ERNEST WELDON wandered about the orderly living-room, giving it some of those little feminine touches. She was not especially good as a touch-giver. The idea was pretty, and appealing to her. Before she was married, she had dreamed of herself as moving softly about her new dwelling, deftly moving a vase here or straightening a flower there, and thus transforming it from a house to a home. Even now, after seven years of marriage, she liked to picture herself in the gracious act.

But, though she conscientiously made a try at it every night as soon as the silk-shaded lamps were lit, she was always a bit bewildered as to how one went about performing those tiny miracles that make all the differ-

ence in the world to a room. The living-room, it seemed to her, looked good enough as it was—as good as it would ever look, with that mantelpiece and the same old furniture. Delia, one of the most thoroughly feminine of creatures, had subjected it to a long series of emphatic touches earlier in the day, and none of her handiwork had since been disturbed. But the feat of making all the difference in the world, so Mrs. Weldon had always heard, was not a thing to be left to servants. Touch-giving was a wife's job. And Mrs. Weldon was not one to shirk the business she had entered.

With an almost pitiful air of uncertainty, she strayed over to the mantel, lifted a small Japanese vase, and stood with it in her hand, gazing helplessly around the room. The white-enameled bookcase caught her eye, and gratefully she crossed to it and set the vase upon it, carefully rearranging various ornaments to make room. To relieve the congestion, she took up a framed photograph of Mr. Weldon's sister in evening gown and eye-glasses, again looked all about, and then set it timidly on the piano. She smoothed the piano-cover ingratiatingly, straightened the copies of "A Day in Venice," "To a Wild Rose," and "Three O'Clock in the Morning," which stood ever upon the rack, walked over to the tea-table and effected a change of places between the cream-jug and the sugar-bowl.

Then she stepped back, and surveyed her innovations. It was amazing how little difference they made to the room.

Sighing, Mrs. Weldon turned her attention to a bowl of daffodils, slightly past their first freshness. There was nothing to be done there; the omniscient Delia had refreshed them with clear water, had clipped their stems, and removed their more passé sisters. Still Mrs. Weldon bent over them pulling them gently about.

She liked to think of herself as one for whom flowers would thrive, who must always have blossoms about her, if she would be truly happy. When her living-room flowers died, she almost never forgot to stop in at the florist's, the next day, and get a fresh bunch. She told people, in little bursts of confidence, that she loved flowers. There was something almost apologetic in her way of uttering her tender avowal, as if she would beg her listeners not to consider her too bizarre in her taste. It seemed rather as though she expected the hearer to fall back, startled, at her words, crying, "Not really! Well, what *are* we coming to?"

She had other little confessions of affection, too, that she made from time to time; always with a little hesitation, as if understandably delicate about baring her heart, she told her love for color, the country, a good time, a really interesting play, nice materials, well-made clothes, and sunshine. But it was her fondness for flowers that she acknowledged oftenest. She seemed to feel that this, even more than her other predilections, set her apart from the general.

Mrs. Weldon gave the elderly daffodils a final pat, now, and once more surveyed the room, to see if any other repairs suggested themselves. Her lips tightened as the little Japanese vase met her gaze; distinctly, it had been better off in the first place. She set it back, the irritation that the sight of the mantel always gave her, welling within her.

She had hated the mantelpiece from the moment they had first come to look at the apartment. There were other things that she had always hated about the place, too—the long, narrow hall, the dark dining-room, the inadequate closets. But Ernest had seemed to like the apartment well enough, so she had said nothing, then or since. After all, what was the use of fussing? Probably there would always be drawbacks, wherever they

lived. There were enough in the last place they had had.

So they had taken the apartment on a five-year lease—that was four years and three months still to go. Mrs. Weldon felt suddenly weary. She lay down on the davenport, and pressed her thin hand against her dull brown hair.

Mr. Weldon came down the street, bent almost double in his battle with the wind from the river. His mind went over its nightly dark thoughts on living near Riverside Drive, five blocks from a subway station—two of those blocks loud with savage gales. He did not much like their apartment, even when he reached it. As soon as he had seen that dining-room, he had realized that they must always breakfast by artificial light—a thing he hated. But Grace had never appeared to notice it, so he had held his peace. It didn't matter much, anyway, he explained to himself. There was pretty sure to be something wrong, everywhere. The dining-room wasn't much worse than that bedroom on the court, in the last place. Grace had never seemed to mind that, either.

Mrs. Weldon opened the door at his ring.

"Well!" she said, cheerily.

They smiled brightly at each other.

"Hel-lo," he said. "Well! You home?"

They kissed, slightly. She watched with polite interest while he hung up his hat and coat, removed the evening papers from his pocket, and handed one to her.

"Bring the papers?" she said, taking it.

She preceded him along the narrow hall to the living-room, where he let himself slowly down into his big chair, with a sound between a sigh and a groan. She sat opposite him, on the davenport. Again they smiled brightly at each other.

"Well, what have you been doing with yourself today?" he inquired.

She had been expecting the ques-

S. S.—July—6

tion. She had planned, before he came in, how she would tell him all the little events of her day—how the woman in the grocer's shop had had an argument with the cashier, and how Delia had tried out a new salad for lunch, with but moderate success, and how Alice Marshall had come to tea and it was quite true that Norma Matthews was going to have another baby. She had woven them into a lively little narrative, carefully choosing amusing phrases of description; had felt that she was going to tell it well and with spirit, and that he might laugh at the account of the occurrence in the grocer's. But now, as she considered it, it seemed to her a long, dull story. She had not the energy to begin it. And he was already smoothing out his paper.

"Oh, nothing," she said, with a gay little laugh. "Did you have a nice day?"

"Why—" he began. He had had some idea of telling her how he had finally put through that Detroit thing, and how tickled J. G. had seemed to be about it. But his interest waned, even as he started to speak. Besides, she was engrossed in breaking off a loose thread from the silk flowers on one of the pillows beside her.

"Oh, pretty fair," he said.

"Tired?" she asked, anxiously.

"Not so much," he answered. "Why—want to do anything to-night?"

"Why, not unless you do," she said, brightly. "Whatever you say."

"Whatever you say," he corrected her, chivalrously.

The subject closed. There was a third exchange of smiles, and then he hid most of himself behind his paper.

Mrs. Weldon, too, turned to the newspaper. But it was an off night for news—some sort of tariff business, a failure in Wall Street, an impending strike, a four-day-old murder mystery. No one she knew had died or become engaged or married,

or had attended any social functions. The fashions depicted on the woman's page were for Miss Fourteen-to-Sixteen. The advertisements ran mostly to bread, and sauces, and foot remedies, and sales of kitchen utensils. She put the paper down.

She wondered how Ernest could get so much enjoyment out of a newspaper. He could occupy himself with one for almost an hour, and then pick up another and go all through the same news with unabated interest. She wished that she could. She wished, even more than that, that she could think of something to say. She glanced around the room for inspiration.

"See my pretty daffy-down-dillies?" she said, finding it. To anyone else, she would have referred to them as daffodils.

Mr. Weldon looked in the direction of the flowers.

"M-m-mm," he said appreciatively, and returned to the news.

She looked at him, and shook her head despondently. He did not see, behind the paper; nor did she see that he was not reading. He was waiting, his hands gripping the printed sheet till their knuckles were blue-white, for her next remark.

It came.

"I love flowers," she said, in one of her little rushes of confidence.

Her husband did not answer. He sighed, his grip relaxed, and he went on reading.

Mrs. Weldon searched the room for another suggestion.

"Ernie," she cooed, "I'm so comfortable. Wouldn't you like to get up and get my handkerchief off the piano for me?"

He rose instantly.

"Why, certainly," he said.

The way to ask people to fetch handkerchiefs, he thought as he went back to his chair, was to ask them to do it, and not try to make them think that you were giving them a treat. Either come right out and ask them, would they or wouldn't they, or else

get up and get your handkerchief yourself.

"Thank you ever so much," his wife said enthusiastically.

Delia appeared in the doorway. "Dinner," she murmured bashfully, as if it were not quite a nice word for a young woman to use, and vanished.

"Dinner, Ern," cried Mrs. Weldon gaily, getting up.

"Just minute," issued indistinctly from behind the newspaper.

Mrs. Weldon waited. Then her lips compressed, and she went over and playfully took the paper from her husband's hands. She smiled carefully at him, and he smiled back at her.

"You go ahead in," he said, rising. "I'll be right with you. I've just got to wash up."

She looked after him, and something like a volcanic eruption took place within her. You'd think that just one night—just one little night—he might go and wash before dinner was announced. Just one night—it didn't seem much to ask. But she said nothing. God knew it was aggravating, but after all, it wasn't worth the trouble of fussing about.

She was waiting, cheerful and bright, courteously refraining from beginning her soup, when he took his place at the table.

"Oh, tomato soup, eh?" he said, animatedly.

"Yes," she answered. "You like it, don't you?"

"Who—me?" he said. "Oh, yes. Yes, indeed."

She smiled at him.

"Yes, I thought you liked it," she said.

"You like it, too, don't you?" he inquired.

"Oh, yes," she assured him. "Yes, I like it ever so much. I'm awfully fond of tomato soup."

"Yes," he said, "there's nothing much better than tomato soup on a cold night."

She nodded.

"I think it's nice, too," she confided.

They had had tomato soup for din-

ner probably three times a month during their married life.

The soup was finished, and Delia brought in the meat.

"Well, that looks pretty good," said Mr. Weldon, carving it. "We haven't had steak for a long time."

"Why, yes, we have, too, Ern," his wife said eagerly. "We had it—let me see, what night were the Baileys here?—we had it Wednesday night—no, Thursday night. Don't you remember?"

"Did we?" he said. "Yes, I guess you're right. It seemed longer, somehow."

Mrs. Weldon smiled politely. She could not think of any way to prolong the discussion.

What did married people talk about, anyway, when they were alone together? She had seen married couples—not dubious ones but people she really knew were husbands and wives—at the theatre or in trains, talking together as animatedly as if they were just acquaintances. She always watched them marvelingly, wondering what on earth they found to say.

She could talk well enough to other people. There never seemed to be enough time for her to finish saying all she wanted to to her friends; she recalled how she had run on to Alice Marshall, only that afternoon. Both men and women found her attractive to listen to, not brilliant, nor particularly funny, but still amusing and agreeable. She was never at a loss for something to say, never conscious of groping around for a topic. She had a good memory for bits of fresh gossip, or little stories of some celebrity that she had read or heard somewhere, and a knack of telling them entertainingly. Things people said to her stimulated her to quick replies, and more amusing narratives. They weren't especially scintillating people, either; it was just that they talked to her.

That was the trick of it. If nobody said anything to you, how were you

to carry on a conversation from there? Inside, she was always bitter and angry at Ernest for not helping her out.

Ernest, too, seemed to be talkative enough when he was with others. People were always coming up and telling her how much they had enjoyed meeting her husband, and what fun he was. They weren't just being polite. There was no reason why they should go out of their way to say it.

Even when she and Ernest had another couple in to dinner or bridge, they both talked and laughed easily, all evening long. But as soon as the guests said good night and what an awfully nice evening it had been, and the door had closed behind them, there the Weldons were again, without a word to say to each other. It would have been intimate and amusing to have talked over their guests' clothes and skill at bridge and probable domestic and financial affairs, and she would do it the next day, with great interest, too, to Alice Marshall, or some other one of her friends. But she couldn't do it with Ernest. Just as she started to, she found she simply couldn't make the effort.

So they would put away the card-table and empty the ash-receivers, with many "Oh, I beg your pardon's" and "No, no—I was in your way's," and then Ernest would say, "Well, I guess I'll go along to bed," and she would answer, "All right—I'll be in in a minute," and they would smile cheerfully at each other, and another evening would be over.

She tried to remember what they used to talk about before they were married, when they were engaged. It seemed to her that they never had had much to say to each other. But she hadn't worried about it then; indeed, she had felt the satisfaction of the correct, in their courtship, for she had always heard that true love was inarticulate. Then, besides, there had been always kissing and things, to take up your mind. But it had turned

out that true marriage was apparently equally dumb. And you can't depend on kisses and all the rest of it to while away the evenings, after seven years.

You'd think that you would get used to it, in seven years, would realize that that was the way it was, and let it go at that. You don't though. A thing like that gets on your nerves. It isn't one of those cozy, companionable silences that people occasionally fall into together. It makes you feel as if you must do something about it, as if you weren't performing your duty. You have the feeling a hostess has when her party is going badly, when her guests sit in corners and refuse to mingle. It makes you nervous and self-conscious, and you talk desperately about tomato soup, and say things like "daffy-down-dilly."

Mrs. Weldon cast about in her mind for a subject to offer her husband. There was Alice Marshall's new system of reducing—no, that was pretty dull. There was the case she had read in the morning's paper about the man of eighty-seven who had taken, as his fourth wife, a girl of twenty—he had probably seen that, and as long as he hadn't thought it worth repeating, he wouldn't think it worth hearing. There was the thing the Bailey's little boy had said about Jesus—no, she had told him that the night before.

She looked over at him, desultorily eating his rhubarb pie. She wished he wouldn't put that smeary stuff on his head. Perhaps it was necessary, if his hair really was falling out, but it did seem that he might find some more attractive remedy, if he only had the consideration to look around for one. Anyway, why must his hair fall out? There was something a little disgusting about people with falling hair.

"Like your pie, Ernie?" she asked vivaciously.

"Why, I don't know," he said, thinking it over. "I'm not so crazy

about rhubarb, I don't think. Are you?"

"No, I'm not so awfully crazy about it," she answered. "But then, I'm not really crazy about any kind of pie."

"Aren't you really?" he said, politely surprised. "I like pie pretty well—some kinds of pie."

"Do you?" The polite surprise was hers now.

"Why, yes," he said. "I like a nice huckleberry pie, or a nice lemon meringue pie, or a—" He lost interest in the thing himself, and his voice died away.

He avoided looking at her left hand, which lay on the edge of the table, palm upward. The long, gray-white ends of her nails protruded beyond the tips of her fingers, and the sight made him uncomfortable. Why in God's name must she wear her fingernails that heathenish length, and file them to those horrible points? If there was anything that he hated, it was a woman with pointed fingernails.

They returned to the living-room, and Mr. Weldon again eased himself down into his chair, reaching for the second paper.

"Quite sure there isn't anything you'd like to do tonight?" he asked solicitously. "Like to go to the movies, or anything?"

"Oh, no," she said. "Unless there's something you want to do."

"No, no," he answered. "I just thought maybe you wanted to."

"Not unless you do," she said.

He began on his paper, and she wandered aimlessly about the room. She had forgotten to get a new book from the library, and it had never in her life occurred to her to re-read a book that she had once completed. She thought vaguely of playing Canfield, but she did not care enough about it to go to the trouble of getting out the cards, and setting up the table. There was some sewing that she could do, and she thought that she might presently go into the bedroom and fetch the camisole that she

was making for herself. Yes, she would probably do that, in a little while.

Ernest would read industriously, and, along toward the middle of the paper, he would start yawning aloud. Something snapped inside Mrs. Weldon when he did this. She would murmur that she had to speak to Delia, and hurry to the kitchen. She would stay there rather a long time, looking vaguely into jars and inquiring half-heartedly about laundry lists, and when she returned, he would have gone in to get ready for bed.

In a year, three hundred of their evenings were like this. Seven times three hundred is more than two thousand.

Mrs. Weldon went into the bedroom, and brought back her sewing. She sat down, pinned the pink satin to her knee, and began whipping narrow lace along the top of the half-made garment. It was fussy work. The fine thread knotted and drew, and she could not get the light adjusted so that the shadow of her head did not fall on her work. She grew a little sick, from the strain on her eyes.

Mr. Weldon turned a page, and yawned aloud. "Wah-huh-huh-huh-huh," he went on, on a descending scale.

Something snapped inside Mrs. Weldon.

III

"My dear," Mrs. Ames said to Mrs. Marshall, "don't you really think that

there must have been some other woman?"

"Oh, I simply couldn't think it was anything like that," said Mrs. Marshall. "Not Ernest Weldon. So devoted—home every night at half-past six, and such good company, and so jolly, and all. I don't see how there *could* have been."

"Sometimes," observed Mrs. Ames, "those awfully jolly men at home are just the kind."

"Yes, I know," Mrs. Marshall said. "But not Ernest Weldon. Why, I used to say to Jim, 'I never saw such a devoted husband in my life,' I said. Oh, not Ernest Weldon."

"I don't suppose," began Mrs. Ames, and hesitated. "I don't suppose," she went on, intently pressing the bit of sodden lemon in her cup with her teaspoon, "that Grace—that there was ever anyone—or anything like that?"

"Oh, Heavens, no," cried Mrs. Marshall. "Grace Weldon just gave her whole life to that man. It was Ernest this and Ernest that every minute. I simply can't understand it. If there was one earthly reason—if they ever fought, or if Ernest drank, or anything like that. But they got along so beautifully together—why, it just seems as if they must have been crazy to go and do a thing like this. Well, I can't begin to tell you how blue its made me. It seems so awful!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Ames, "it certainly is too bad."



ONE of the standard ways of giving offense is by refraining from saying what you are expected to say.



INGRATITUDE is a sign that the ingrate doubts that one will ever be able to do him the same favor again.



Volcano

By Paul Eldridge

A COUCH. A dozen pillows. Softer than water. A young woman drowned within the pillows. Except her face and her right hand. Between the index and the middle finger a long cigarette. A setting sun upon a marble pedestal. From her two oval nostrils blue and gray smoke. A volcano. Lips thinning. Opening slowly. Stars glittering among blue and gray clouds.

"Love? What is love?"

Lips closing slowly. Stars vanishing. Blue and gray smoke through the oval nostrils. A volcano.



East Wind

By Bernice L. Kenyon

FROM this high place, the bare slope reaches out
To lower fields, but here the wind blows keen;
We brace our feet in the pliant, frost-freed grass;
We stare, with the sunlight gold across our eyes.
Wind—wind to lean against—sharp morning wind—
East wind that races through a vacant sky!
Here life mounts in the air—here life is rung
Like bells, in sunshine, to blue distances.

No hour could ever move us more with beauty . . .
Summer will deepen the shadows of all things,
There will be storms from the far line of hills;
But one loud song keeps running in my heart:
Glorious of all things—glorious forever—
The day of wind, the sky, and you who stand
Apart from me, yet near,—and this worn grass
Whose thin gray blades are speared with newer green,—
And all the world spread out in the rising day:
Glorious of all things—glorious forever!



Americana

By Major Owen Hatteras, D.S.O.

I

West Virginia

FROM an oration by the Hon. Frank R. Yoke, of Morgantown, W. Va., delivered before the Kiwanis Club at Clarksburg, W. Va., on January 30 last:

At Parkersburg there is the greatest shovel factory in the world; at Charleston the greatest axe factory; at Fairmont the world's largest bottle factory; at Martinsburg the largest hosiery mills in the world; at Mannington the largest sanitary pottery works; at Morgantown the only pressed-prism glass plant in the world; at Wheeling the largest manufactory of proprietary medicines; at Charleston the largest sheet-glass plant in the world; and up at Richwood, the largest clothespin factory. These things are not merely great—they are the greatest in the world, and they are located in West Virginia.

II

Arizona

PRAYER offered at Phoenix, Ariz., during the inauguration of the governor of the commonwealth, the Hon. George Wylie Paul Hunt:

O Thou eternal Jehovah, on this inaugural day, as this grand old Roman assumes the gubernatorial responsibilities of this great commonwealth, we stand as hopeful, happy expectants of better days for Arizona. We pray that he may have wisdom to steer the ship of state over the breakers of extravagance and the deep seas of indebtedness which now confront him.

During his tenure of office spare him the unjust, unreasonable criticism of disgruntled, mugwump Democrats, shrewd and designing Republican politicians, and sensational headlines of newspapers.

Grant, O Lord, that the banner of peace and prosperity may wave over Arizona until every state in the union shall point with pride to this, the youngest, fairest daughter,

and brightest star that shines in the galaxy of states, and that Arizona may be regarded as the playground of the angels.

III

Nebraska

FROM a speech by Prof. Dr. Paul W. Ivey, of the University of Nebraska, before the Progressive Sales Institute at Minneapolis:

When you make a study of silk and get to know it, you get excited about it. A woman went into a store one day, picked up a string of beads on the counter and asked the clerk: "Are these ivory?" The clerk replied, "No, they are vegetable ivory." "What's that?" asked the woman. "Oh," the sales person replied, "it's a kind of ivory, you know." "Oh, it's a kind of ivory." Interesting, isn't it? If the clerk had Vision she could have told the customer that the kind of ivory the beads were made of grew on trees in South America. She could have told her something of the process of manufacture, which would have created the impression of value. The value is not in the merchandise—it is in the customer's head. You have got to get it in there. * * * *

Hogs are nothing—cattle are nothing—the biggest thing in the country is the human being.

IV

Minnesota

FROM a speech by the Hon. Thomas D. Schall, of Minnesota, at the Evergreen School for the Blind, Baltimore, as reported in the *Congressional Record*, Vol. 64, No. 83, page 5527:

When I was in France in 1918 . . . I talked with a Frenchman whose daughter had been engaged to the son of a man within the inner circle of the German Empire, and I was astounded at the revelation that in 1912

the Kaiser had given orders that under no circumstances should Theodore Roosevelt ever again be President of the United States.

V

Ohio

FROM an Associated Press dispatch from Cleveland, the old home of John D. Rockefeller, March 9 last:

A nine-months-old baby was burned to death and his mother, Mrs. Louis Bordanaro, was taken to a hospital in a dying condition, the result of an explosion of a whisky still in the attic of her home late today. The woman was attending to the still with the baby in her arms when it exploded.

VI

Arkansas

Examples of human nomenclature from Arkansas, from a long list of Arkansas slackers in the late war for liberty and Christianity, published by the Adjutant-General of the Army:

Osby Clay	Baldy Looney
Newvern Epps	Crockett Loolas
Judge Hoffman	Ossie Lux
Eyeris Jackson	Zealous Woods
Orange Booney	Lemon Griffin
Dozy Donahue	Tirey Gusby
Effie Harris	Gentle Graham
Perry Phe	M. B. Pigg
Pink Ivon	Major Brown

Failure of heroic names to inspire their bearers, as revealed by the same list:

George Washington	Napoleon Norman
Jack Johnson	Stonewall Jackson

VII

Wisconsin

FROM a pamphlet entitled "Official Information Regarding the Gideons, the Christian Commercial Travelers' Association of America":

In the early part of the year 1899, John H. Nicholson of Janesville, Wis., came to the Central Hotel at Boscobel, Wis., for the night. The hotel being crowded, he was requested to take a bed in a double room with S. E. Hill of Beloit, Wis., where each discovered the other to be a Christian. They had their evening devotions together and on their knees before God were given the thoughts

afterwards worked out. On May 31, they met at Beaver Dam, Wis., concluded to band Christian commercial travelers together for mutual recognition and united service for the Master, and decided to call a meeting at Janesville, Wis., July 1, 1899 in the Y. M. C. A. Bldg. Only three men were present, John H. Nicholson, W. J. Knights, and S. E. Hill. They organized with S. E. Hill, president; W. J. Knights, vice-president; John H. Nicholson, secretary and treasurer. Much thought was given to what the name of their Association should be, and after special prayer that God might lead them to select the proper one, Mr. Knights arose from his knees and said, "We will be called Gideons."

VIII

Texas

FROM a circular issued to the faithful by the Rev. A. E. Findley, late pastor of the Church of Christ at Brownwood, Texas:

I am the Rev. A. E. Findley—the man whom God has called back.

I have acquired 100 acres in the wonderful Smackover field of Arkansas.

God has given this golden land to you and I and has provided ways and means to retrieve past losses in oil investments.

The apostle Paul said, "When you fail to provide for your own household, you have denied the faith and become worse than an infidel." Let's heed him!

Remember, I am a preacher of the Gospel, and always expect to be—but I have consented to take enough time to put this company over for big winnings.

GET YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS INTO THE MAIL!—and as QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

IX

Maryland

FROM an illustrated article under an eight-column headline in the Baltimore *Sunday Sun* of March 11 last:

We "undistinguished norms of *Homo americanus*" are the people who are proud of calling ourselves "just folks." Philistines we may be, for indeed we are indifferent to the higher intellectual life, preferring rather more commonplace interests. We like our own society. Personally, we prefer the human Harding to the highbrow Wilson in our presidential chair. Harding, like us, is "just folks," and so is his wife.

X

Kansas

FROM a handbill of warning issued to the citizens of Kansas by the editor of

the *Jayhawker American*, the leading patriotic gazette of those parts:

DANGER

Does this mean you?

What would you think if you knew that the Negroes of America have formed secret organizations and are storing away guns and ammunition to be used upon you when the opportunity presents?

Did you ever hear of the late Pope of Rome's statement that he would control America in ten years?

And have you ever heard when, during the world war, where hundreds of Catholics got in as officers of the Y. M. C. A. under disguise as Protestants for the sole purpose of doing deeds to cause the soldiers to despise the Y. M. C. A. in order to ruin this big Christian American Protestant institution?

XI

District of Columbia

FROM a Washington news dispatch:

Announcement that the war in Europe was concluded in 1918 has not yet reached the United States Shipping Board. In a booklet entitled "Going Abroad," now being distributed to prospective passengers on its boats, the board says: "Passports will in all proper

cases be issued to all parts of the world except enemy territory and Soviet Russia."

XII

California

DIALOGUE in a courtroom at Sacramento, Calif., when ten I. W. W.'s came up for sentence under the insane California "criminal syndicalism" law:

GLENN, J.—Can't you see that it is not the place of judges to change the law to fit the case at hand? We only interpret it. If you want to change the laws, go to the legislators and the people who sanction them.

LARUE (a prisoner)—Listen to the voice of Pontius Pilate! He washes his hands of our blood!

XIII

Manitoba

FROM a speech by Sir James Aikins, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, delivered before a convention of Rotary Clubs at Winnipeg:

God was the first great Rotarian. He rescued the world from void and chaos and gave it orderly government.



The Novice

By Velma Byers

*THE body this veil shrouds and hides
Is satin warm as any bride's,*

*But they who walk within this wall
Will never think of this at all.*

*(Within this wall they never guess
I answer April's soft caress)—*

*That mass of wild plum-blossom brings
Hot memory that tears and stings.*

*Within this wall they softly go
With quickened step, and never know*

*How I mourn one wild day in spring
And count my beads—remembering.*

An Answer

By Amanda Benjamin Hall

I'LL cast my lot with Timothy—
Timothy's a toper—

A "let-the-last-one-be-on-me,"
Tavern bird and groper!

Or bid them publish banns in church
This Sabbath for my mating
With Tom who casts his hook for perch
When Time, itself, is waiting.

There's Wicked Bill, so prone to curse
The good will not go near him,
I'd take for better or for worse—
So I could always hear him.

Or tie me to a tattle-tale,
The lifter of all latches,
With mischief on his tongue for sale
Brighter than his patches.

I'll marry one too slack to save,
Some ne'er-do-well or other,
Or Gregory, the merry knave,
A torment to his mother.

Oh, when the birds begin to stir
I'll go before the friar
And plight my troth with Christopher—
Though Christopher's a liar!

I'll wed the worst man to be had
With nose lit like a beacon—
But never you, my honest lad,
Duller than a deacon.



The Heated Ploughshares

By Carter Brooke Jones

I

OTIS DUNCAN was a member of the jury. As he listened to the evidence, his head was bent over his collar, which was pressing the flesh on his neck into great creases, thus caricaturing his several chins. His little eyes, the only energetic part of him, danced from witness to examining counsel, from the judge to the spectators, from the sun-dazzled tin roof across the street to the nervous hands of the juror beside him. The ends of his thin red mustache turned slightly upward, toward apple-ruddy, apple-plump cheeks, hair faintly reddish.

"Character" witnesses were taking the stand, one after the other, in swift succession.

Otis Duncan had listened attentively enough until this morning, but now he was bored acutely. He was thinking of his tiny real estate office in a suburb, where he sat indolently puffing a cigar and waiting for business. He was aware of his home—a square, commodious house clattering with children and haunted by the shrill, insistent voice of his wife. A mean job, this jurying, but it wasn't bad for a change, an experience—you might say a cheap vacation from the worries of work and the cares of home. He didn't mind it so much, but he'd be glad when it was over.

He blew his nose indignantly. Character witnesses! What difference did they make? That was a game. They chose up sides: the state took six, the defense a like number. One set of them swore one way, the other just the opposite. How was a man to determine any-

thing? Such was life. Ho hum! He did not trouble to hide his yawn. Well, here was Johann Schmidt. He looked honest, talked so, probably was. But, likely enough, so were the witnesses who had spoken to the contrary. Life was like that. Half of your neighbors would come in and swear you were a truthful, good and kindly man. The other half would insist you were a

As the jurors were led like prisoners to their midday meal, Mr. Duncan further summed-up to himself this matter of State versus Luke Rucker. There probably would be no more evidence of any importance except Rucker's—if his lawyer decided to put him on the stand, and the lawyer hardly could afford not to.

Supposing, for the sake of argument, that Luke Rucker didn't testify, that no more evidence was produced on either side: what would be a juror's verdict? Otis Duncan admitted that he'd be damned if he could say. And murder, too—a man's life depending! This was a fine fix for Mr. Duncan, of the Duncan Realty Company, Inc., to have got himself into. He could have said he had an opinion—anything to avoid a murder case. But here he was. He couldn't back out now. True he didn't have to decide yet, but he was rushing toward that time. His duty as a citizen. . . . He was a heavy taxpayer, an officer in the lodge. By God, he'd uphold law and order or know why! He wouldn't worry either.

Yet, with a lifted forkful of beef, in the middle of a discussion of the demerits of the climate, he continued his puzzled detachment.

"If it was boxing," he told himself, "I'd call it a draw."

It was, in fact, a tie so far as he could see. There had been about the same number of witnesses on each side, and he would believe or disbelieve one as soon as another. Every time the state presented some strong piece of evidence, the defense met it, turned it aside, with testimony equally convincing. Likewise the defense had had several high cards trumped by the prosecution's cross-examination. So it had gone. The opposing lawyers had studied each possible move, guarding the approaches so well that the game was fairly in a deadlock. Mr. Duncan could think of no important advantage on either side—or, rather, he could recall several on each side.

Take, for example, that bit of testimony about the defendants overheard remark, just after the shot was fired. That was a strong circumstance, and not denied so far, but—explained by the defense, checked off, you might say. Luke Rucker, hidden by the woods, but within hearing, had cried, "I got him."

Well, the defense admitted that a charge from Luke's shotgun had killed Lanahan: it simply was a question of whether it had been accidental or intended. The overheard remark might have been convincing along with other things, had not the defense, cross-questioning, proved by the same witness, Lanahan's hired man, that he had seen a couple of quail fly out of the woods that very instant. And Luke was known to have been out with his dog all morning; he had shot several quail. That witness had found Lanahan's body, in the field bordering the woods, and had yelled to the recognized voice in the woods, but Luke had not answered. That was odd—Luke's silence, his disappearance. Yet the defense had shown that Luke returned to his shack with his dog and his string of quail, calm as you please. That fellow—what was his name? No matter. He had chatted with Luke, and Luke hadn't seemed worried.

"I shot one in a real thick place up

in the woods," Luke was reported to have said.

Thus it was the theory of the defense that Luke had shot a quail and a man with the same charge . . . the one by design, the other by chance. Not impossible. But was it probable? And those three words, what of them? A murderer wouldn't be apt to shout *I got him*, unless he was three-quarters daffy, and none had so described Luke. Witnesses had said he was "queer."

"Some people might say *I was queer*," Mr. Duncan conceded to himself charitably.

That defense lawyer hadn't said whether his client was to take the stand, but everybody knew that Luke would. He'd built up the case cleverly, so that he wouldn't have to depend entirely on Luke, but Luke would round out the evidence. He probably would talk himself free, or—he might hang himself.

Mr. Duncan, pursuing his little excursion for the defense, was halted suddenly by his recollection of the motive. The defense had not torn down the motive. Would it be able to? He doubted. For a long time there had been ill-feeling between Luke Rucker and Lanahan. It was common talk of the countryside, judging from the witnesses. And how was Luke going to explain his threat to *get* Lanahan? Up to this minute nobody had denied it.

Still (Mr. Duncan folded his napkin judicially) you couldn't convict a man for having a motive to kill somebody. Decidedly not, or nine-tenths of the populace would be in jail. The court's instructions probably would term it "a circumstance to be considered." However, it didn't help Luke any.

Defense counsel had made an opening statement. Luke's side of it was that he didn't know his shotgun had killed Lanahan and so hadn't stopped after picking up the quail. The dense thicket had prevented him from seeing Lanahan, though Lanahan, in the field, was fairly close. Neither had Luke heard anything that might have led him to suspect the accident. So the jury was to understand.

End the case right now, and a man probably would say, "not guilty." Otis Duncan remembered something about "a reasonable doubt." Still . . . well, wait and see.

II

He watched a huge fly circle languidly toward the ceiling of the court room. He was fighting off the sleep that a heavy luncheon and a sluggish of a summer afternoon invited. Now and then, in spite of his efforts, his vision thickened and his head dropped with a jerk. But suddenly he sat upright, his drowsiness gone. Luke Rucker was taking the stand.

Luke was slight, with untidy straw-colored hair and a ragged mustache. He wore stained corduroy trousers, a greasy blue-serge coat, a yellow shirt open at the neck. He might have been any age; he said he was forty-two. His weak blue eyes never looked directly at the judge, at counsel or the jury, but wavered continually from one of these legal appurtenances to another. The handful of spectators—the case had aroused no interest—he did not seem to notice.

The attorney for the defense, Mr. Conway, was a tall, stagy man, with an inexplicable Prince Albert coat, above which his collar was wilting rapidly. He had a resonant voice, and enunciated as if dictating a letter.

"Now then, Luke," he was asking paternally, "did you as a boy attend school?"

Within his mustache Luke Rucker said something inaudible.

"You'll have to talk louder," admonished Mr. Conway, "all these jurors must hear. What was it you said?"

"Some," muttered the witness.

"How long?"

"Two—three years."

"That was all?"

"Yeah."

"So that, Luke, you hadn't the advantage of much education. Now then. Did you always live in the country?"

The defendant mumbled words which,

under requested repetition, were found to be: "Once I sold papers here in the city—maybe six months."

Mr. Duncan was irritated. At least the man could make himself understood. What kind of an impression was that to make on a jury?

"All the rest of the time," continued Mr. Conway, "you lived in the country?"

"Mostly."

"What did you do in the country?"

The little man ran his hand through his straw-seeming hair, disheveling it further. "I worked in the woods—farm-handed, logged-off land—done most anything."

"And in recent years?"

Again Luke Rucker's voice weakened, and the jurors craned forward, trying vainly to hear.

The judge scowled.

"You must speak louder, Mr. Rucker," he insisted.

The witness raised his head unhappily, looked partly at the judge.

"I say—I been on that place out by Wayne Creek."

"Where you lived at the time of this—ah—unfortunate occurrence?"

"Uh huh."

Slowly, deviously, after much repeating, the jury learned that Luke Rucker, alone in his shack, contrived by various means to live; he raised vegetables and sold them; he had traps in the foothills, and sometimes they yielded fair returns.

"Coming to the events about which there has been so much testimony, Luke. When did you first meet Lana-han?"

Luke's baffled eyes wandered around the room. "I don't just know."

"Well, what's your best recollection. Was it a year—two or three years?"

"Maybe."

"Maybe what? You must be explicit, Luke."

As Luke pondered with a puzzled frown, the judge, smiling indulgently, interposed:

"He means, Mr. Rucker, that you must tell everything as closely as you can remember."

"Well, I don't just know," repeated Luke. "Two years—I guess maybe."

"Two years," agreed Mr. Conway. "How did you happen to meet?"

The defendant meditated until Otis Duncan was sure there would be no answer, but Luke, barely heard, finally explained: "Seems like I was standing in front o' my place and Lanahan he come up and says—he says, 'I got the White place now, so's I guess we're neighbors, huh?' And I says 'sure' or something that way. And we talked some more, I guess."

"After that did you see Lanahan often?"

"Maybe oncet or twicet a week."

"How far was the White place from yours?"

"Three sections."

"How far would that be?"

"Three sections," repeated Luke doubtfully.

Mr. Duncan scowled. How he hated stupidity! There was no excuse for it—in these enlightened times.

"I know," said Mr. Conway, with a forced smile, "but what is it in miles?"

"Maybe three miles, I'd say."

"Maybe three miles. How did you and Lanahan get along these two years?"

"We got along good."

"Friendly?"

"We was friends—yeah."

"When was the first time you and Lanahan ever had any trouble?"

"Never until—" The rest of the answer seemed to shrink within the witness-stand; no one could hear it.

Admonished, Luke raised his voice a little. "—that time about the trap."

"That's what we want to know, Luke. Tell us in your own way what the trouble was over the trap. . . . No, no. You must speak much louder."

"Well, I been putting out traps up by Swift Creek, and I never knowed any of it belonged to White's place. Nobody never told me. Jim Rogers can tell you I says to him one day, I says—"

The deputy district attorney, Mr. Haskin—an incisive young man, dressed

in the careless elegance of a country club week-end—interrupted to request the court to have the witness stay on his subject.

Luke Rucker was told to concern himself only with Lanahan.

"But Jim Rogers knows—" he urged stubbornly, pausing at his lawyer's uplifted hand.

"Never mind Jim Rogers," directed Mr. Conway. "He hasn't been brought into this case. Just tell us what went on between you and Lanahan. Forget Jim Rogers."

Luke's shifting eyes had a trapped expression. "Well, he come and bawled me out."

"Who bawled you out?"

"Jim Rogers?" suggested Mr. Haskin, with an amused look at Mr. Conway. And Mr. Conway, his dignity injured, appealed to the court for permission to conduct his examination.

"No—Lanahan," said Luke earnestly.

"Why did he do it? Go ahead—tell us about it."

"Account of the trap." Luke's voice trailed into a worried silence.

"All right, go on," prompted defense counsel, with a thin smile at the jury that Mr. Duncan interpreted as, "You see what I'm up against; I'm doing my best for him."

"There was one trap," began Luke, and continued gropingly: "one trap—there by the lower end of Swift Creek. It was close to that there little pine forest—close to—well—" He looked hurriedly up and down the court room, as if hoping for aid in locating the trap. "Well—close to the pine forest. He found me lookin' it over, and he come up—mad as a hornet, you might say—and says, he says, 'So that's it! What's what?' I says, and he says, 'You trapping on my property.' And I says, 'I never knowed it was White's property here.' Then he says, 'You ————'"

The defendant repeated the obscenity with his eyes widened naively.

"'You ————,' he says, 'you knowed too. Didn't you catch a fox here last month?' I says I

guesses maybe I did. Then he told me to get out, and I got."

"That was all that happened on that occasion?"

"All as I can think of. I got out. . . . I taken my trap too."

"You didn't want any trouble with Lanahan, did you?"

But the deputy district attorney made a successful intervention by suggesting that "counsel could argue his case later."

"Anyhow," resumed Mr. Conway with caustic dignity, "even the district attorney will allow us to get at the facts, and so—"

"We'll go further—we'll assist you," smiled Mr. Haskin.

"—And so," said Mr. Conway, "I'll ask you, Luke, what, if any, was your next encounter with this fellow Lanahan."

"Well, he come up to my shack that time."

Luke lapsed into meditation. Otis Duncan, looking at the juror beside him, saw in that slim old man's face an expression of suppressed contempt.

"What time?" asked defense counsel patiently. "The jury don't know, Luke. Tell them all about it. When, in relation to your conversation over the trap, did Lanahan come to your place?"

Luke Rucker placed a reflective hand over his ragged mustache, and spoke so softly that not even the judge, who was nearest, could hear. Scolded simultaneously by the court and both attorneys, the witness stiffened guiltily and testified, loudly enough: "I say it must'a' been a month or so."

"A month. What happened?"

"Nothin' happened."

The few spectators tittered; Mr. Duncan smiled broadly. The judge rapped on the bench with his knuckles.

Mr. Conway proceeded. "Then what was said?"

"Oh." Luke frowned as his slow mind turned back. "He says, 'What about that there fox?' 'What fox?' I says. 'You ———, you know,' he says, 'the one what you drug in from my place.' 'Well, how of it?' I says.

Then he says for me to kick in with the money what I got for the pelt. That's all. Only I laughed and says to him, I says, 'Just as well forgit the fox now.' 'Forget hell!' he says, 'they ain't so common as that.' And he walks away talkun to hisself."

"And when did you see him again?"

"Not till a week before—before this thing come up."

Luke's eyes, catching Otis Duncan's chilling gaze, fixed themselves on the floor beneath the witness-stand.

"Tell us of that meeting."

"That was down by Conner's Mill. I run into him on the road. He asks me when was I go'n 'ta pay him what I owed him."

Luke paused, playing with his mustache, for so long that his lawyer prodded him with another question.

"I kind'a laughed," recalled Luke. "But he got sore, Lanahan, and hauled off and slapped me. About that time Bill come along, and Bill—"

"Bill who?"

"Oh, Bill Luken. And he seen us arguin', me and Lanahan."

"But Mr. Luken has testified that he didn't see Lanahan slap you. What would you say as to that?"

"I wouldn't say nothin'," decided Luke. "I don't know as I'd call Bill a liar. Might be he never seen Lanahan slap me. It was a little after that I first seen him."

Mr. Conway drew himself to the full importance of his Prince Albert coat. "Then what transpired?"

Luke, after a perplexed pause at the last word, added: "We had some words, me and Lanahan. He says, 'I'll go to law over it.' 'Go on,' I says. 'But first,' he says then, 'I'll take it outen your hide.' 'If you do, I'll get you,' I says. And I run back a ways. I didn't want no trouble—he was bigger'n me."

"The prosecution," said Mr. Conway, "is making much over that statement of yours—I'll get you.' What did you mean by that?"

"I meant," Luke murmured simply. "I'd take and bust him over the head

with the first thing I could lay hand on."

"But not unless your own life was threatened?"

Mr. Haskin rose with the straight swiftness of an automaton. "Don't help your client testify, Mr. Conway. I'll admit he needs it."

"That last remark," shouted Mr. Conway, "was unworthy of an officer of this court, one sworn to uphold justice! I'll ask that the jury be instructed to disregard it."

"The jury will disregard it," the judge ordered colorlessly. "It was improper, Mr. Haskin, although I'll also sustain your objection to the last question. Confine yourselves to the matters at issue, gentlemen."

With an injured expression, Mr. Conway returned to the witness.

"Then what did you mean, Luke—that you planned to attack him, regardless of what else he did?"

"No," said Luke, in a low, uninterested tone. "I didn't want no trouble."

"Do you mean only that you would have defended your life as best you could?"

"Yeah."

When it came time to describe the events of the day of Lanahan's death, several photographs and sketches, mounted on the easles, were flanked about the witness-stand, to add to Luke's perplexity. Otis Duncan, bored with the mass of detail, suppressed several yawns, and observed that the huge fly still circled lazily above him.

The rest of Luke's story was dragged out of him in tortuous degrees. Dully, in short, groping words, he remembered his start from the shack that winter day; his hunt for quail, the final shot in the woods, his return.

The recital droned to a close. Mr. Conway's face lighted with relief. He had but a few more questions.

"Now then, Luke, take this pointer and look at the sketch marked Defense Exhibit Five."

Luke gave the easel a vague glance.

"This," indicated the attorney, "is supposed to be the edge of the woods."

"It don't look like ut," objected Luke, gravely descending from the witness-stand to view the sketch more closely.

"But it's supposed to be," insisted Mr. Conway. "Show us about where you were when you shot the quail in the woods."

Luke pondered a full minute. Then he brought the pointer to a pause in the air a foot below the bottom of the easel.

"It'd be somewheres about there," he explained.

"But that's three-quarters of a mile from the edge!" fretted Mr. Conway. "Can't you figure from the scale?"

"Can't you let him do the testifying?" countered Mr. Haskin. "Maybe he was three-quarters of a mile away. Who knows?"

"It is certain the prosecution does not," Mr. Conway shot back, "since all its conclusions in this case are speculative."

"The speculation that two and two always equal four," retorted Mr. Haskin.

The judge quieted the attorneys. Mr. Duncan looked at the juror beside him; they both smiled.

III

THE mid-afternoon recess over, the prosecutor launched into his cross-examination. His accurately darting intellect, swift to catch stray words and hurl them back in logical patterns, coped so easily with the sluggish, bewildered mind of the grimy little man on the stand that Mr. Duncan thought it a droll spectacle. Step by step was Luke led deeper into tangles of inconsistency and discrepancy. He struggled feebly—lost, wandering directionless.

Mr. Haskin stood far back from the witness, one leg looped over a corner of the table where his notes were piled. There was no bulldozing in his attitude: only a complete poise, of which a half-smile was part.

"By the way," it had occurred to him, "why was it you went quail hunting that day when it was a fact, was it not,

that the season for quail had closed?"

Luke brooded over this a moment, and then said: "I—don' know. I just went."

"Was the season closed or was it not?"

Luke murmured in his chaff-like mustache.

"You must speak louder—much louder."

"I guess maybe it was—closed."

"Don't you know it was?"

"No, sir—that is, no way sure."

"Were you in the habit of going hunting out of season, of breaking the law in that way?"

"I can't see the relevancy—" interrupted Mr. Conway.

"I can," assured the prosecutor.

"He may answer," decreed the judge.

But Luke was silent until reprimanded, when he said: "No."

"But sometimes you did?"

"Sometimes—I guess maybe. I never knowed half the time. They change them seasons around about every year. How's a man to know?"

"I'm sure I can't suggest any particular method," admitted Mr. Haskin. "However, I'll ask you this. Didn't you, on a day about three weeks before this shooting, at a place near your cabin, say to J. L. Simpson, in words or substance, 'No more quail this year; yesterday was my last hunt.'"

Luke Rucker seemed to drift into a reverie. He frowned; his restless eyes again encountered the hostile look of Mr. Duncan.

"Seems like I did pass some sech remark," he decided, "but I wouldn't be no ways sure."

"You don't deny you said that?"

"No. If he says I said it, chances are I did."

"Exactly. But you went quail hunting three weeks later. You changed your mind?"

"I must'a'."

"And on that day your feeling toward Mr. Lanahan was not very kindly?"

"I—I never had no dealings with him that day—one way or the other."

S.S.—July—7

"But you hated him?"

"No more'n he hated me," contended the witness.

"Perhaps not, but you hated him."

"He hated me," Luke persisted.

"But I'm trying to discover your attitude. You admit you had, we'll say, a feeling against him?"

"Only that I never aimed to let him take and slap me fer nothun."

"Ah, that's the point. And what did you intend to do about it?"

"Nothun," said Luke vaguely.

"Nothing. Then why did you say you were not going to let him slap you?"

Luke scowled over this problem. "Just . . . I won't let no man slap me if I don't haf'ta."

"But you haven't answered my question. How did you intend to prevent him?"

"Any ways I could, I guess maybe."

"You would have shot him?"

Several jurors straightened in their seats.

"Well, I never shot him," argued Luke.

"But you were prepared to?"

Mr. Conway inquired: "Is that what you're trying him for?"

"Not exactly," returned the prosecutor, "but premeditation always is an important element in first-degree murder."

"We'll admit," conceded Mr. Conway, "that he meditated defending himself as best he could from a larger, stronger man. If that's a crime—"

"Is it self-defense now, or accidental shooting?" posed Mr. Haskin. "I'm in a quandary. I thought I knew your case, but—"

"Gentlemen!" intervened the judge. "You can argue this case separately and at the proper time."

With an amused expression, Mr. Haskin went back to the witness.

"Mr. Rucker, are you sure you didn't go out with the gun that day expecting to encounter Lanahan?"

"No. I went huntun quail."

"You've said you shot some quail. But when you got near the edge of the

woods, tell us about that once more—it isn't quite clear in my mind. Why did you go into the woods?"

"Because," explained Luke, "the dog he leads me in, and stops on a dead point."

"Thus you knew there were quail."

"Yeah."

"And you flushed them?"

"Sure."

"How many were there?"

"Whole covey. Maybe ten, twelve—I wouldn't be no way sure."

"The brush was very thick at that point?"

"Thick—yeah."

"Yet you shot at least one bird?"

"One. I blazes into the bunch. One drops."

"After the shot you heard no sounds?"

"No."

"You didn't hear a man crash down into the dead leaves and dry frozen twigs, a hundred and fifty yards away?"

"Nothun like that."

"And you didn't see Jensen, Lanahan's hired man, nor hear him yell?"

"No, I never."

"What did happen—after that shot?"

"The dog he run and got the bird and brung it back."

"Then it was that you cried, 'I got him'?"

"Yeah—I guess so. Seems like I said it. . . . I never took no notice at the time."

"But why did you say that—aloud?"

"On account—well, gettin' the bird and all, I guess maybe. I never expected to get him in that there brush."

"Was it your habit," pursued the state's attorney, "to yell 'I got him' every time you shot a quail?"

Luke gave this a studied pause.

"No," he concluded, "not reg'lar or nothun. Sometimes."

Mr. Haskins suddenly turned half toward the jury; his face darkened. "Luke Rucker, on the day that you say Lanahan slapped you, you said 'I'll get you.' And when you shot the quail, you said 'I got him.' Is that true?"

"Yeah," Luke had said doubtfully, tilting his head at the new puzzle, before his attorney could interject: "Clearly improper, Your Honor—constituting argument!"

Ignoring alike the answer and the objection, Mr. Haskins proceeded: "But you didn't see Lanahan starting into those woods?"

"No—I never see him a-t'all."

"Yet you know that he fell dead at the edge of the woods, his heart pierced by shot of the same size you got the quail with? . . . Speak up so we can hear."

"I—guess maybe he did. That's what they say."

"How do you account for his death?"

"Which?"

"How do you explain his death?"

"I don't know. Must'a' got some o' them shots in him—I guess maybe."

"But you don't know how he got the shots in him?"

Luke looked at Otis Duncan, peered up at the judge, darted glances at the spectators, finally fixing his eyes on the impassive face of the court stenographer as he answered: "No." On every side Luke encountered relentless gazes. He tapped together the ends of his fingers, with their long black nails; his breath was quick and shallow with nervousness.

"That quail," added the prosecutor slowly, "what did it look like?"

"Same as any other quail—any other you'd bring down," Luke managed to say.

"It was shot dead?"

"Yeah—never even fluttered."

"It was full of shot?"

"Might be. I never taken notice. Just only that he was dead—that—it was dead."

Beads of sweat stood out on Luke's hair-strewn forehead. Mr. Duncan turned a scornful chuckle into a cough. Some men insisted on putting the rope around their own necks. Well, it served such thickwits right.

Mr. Haskins queried: "What did you do after you picked up the bird?"

"I went on through the woods."

"But not in the direction the birds flew?"

"Yeah. That is—part of 'um went straight ahead, but the rest they lines off to one side, and I follows the dog."

"You followed the dog. And rather hurriedly, did you not?"

"A pretty good clip, I guess maybe."

"What was your hurry?"

"Nothun special. The dog goes right fast, generally always."

"Don't you ever tell him to *heel*?"

"Sometimes, when he gits too far off."

Mr. Haskin laughed slightly.

"Very well, Luke. What you want this jury to believe is that this one shell of yours scattered enough shots to kill a quail at short range, *in the thickest sort of woods*, and at the same time to instantly kill a man a hundred and fifty yards away?"

Luke returned vaguely his tormentor's straight, boring look.

"Is that what you expect the jury to believe?"

Luke glanced helplessly at the jury. He said nothing.

The prosecutor took a step forward. "I'm waiting for you to answer."

Luke mumbled, then, barely audible, said: "Guess it must'a' happened like you make out. I don' know nothun about it—only shootin' the quail. . . . Then, later on, they come and grabbed me and says, 'You done it.' Only—I never, and I told 'um so."

Mr. Haskin leaped into the tracks of the last words.

"Just so. In fact, when the deputies came to your shack to arrest you, wasn't that the first thing you said—that you *hadn't done it*?"

The defendant puckered his brows, to all appearances oblivious of the pit that spread hugely before him.

"Might be," he hazarded, "I can't say no ways sure. I says somethun sort'a like that."

"The first thing?"

"Yeah—most likely."

"Before the deputies came had any one told you of Lanahan's sudden death?"

"No."

"Then how did you know why they had come? Why did you say you hadn't done it if you didn't know what *it* was?"

Mr. Haskin stood with his arms folded, his half-smile shaped with a hint of contempt.

Luke, groping blindly, murmured: "I don' know. . . . I must'a' knowed—some way or other. Let's see now—" His worried eyes clutched at the jury box, but the twelve expressions there drove him to regard the floor intently. "Seems like I recollect as how one o' them deputies says as they was comin' up the path, *jest* as I come out the door, 'There's the man what shot Lanahan.'"

"And what deputy was that?"

"I couldn't be no ways sure. There was four, you know."

"Could you point him out?"

"Don' know as I could. I—guess maybe not."

"But one of them said that?"

"Must'a'."

"But did he?"

"Yeah. Somebuddy did—fer certain. I never dreamt it."

"And if I call all the deputies to the stand, and they deny it—what are we to think then?"

Mr. Conway, seeing a dim ray of light in the gloom, interceded vigorously.

"Oh, I'll withdraw the question," said Mr. Haskin magnanimously. "It doesn't matter."

He glanced at his notes. "So that, Luke, you are asking us to believe that a man just simply happened to be within range of your gun when you made that remarkable shot in the woods—and *that man your enemy*?"

"I object!" thundered Mr. Conway. "He's been over that ground a dozen times. Besides, the question is essentially improper. I would like to be heard before Your Honor—"

"Oh, never mind," surrendered Mr. Haskin, seating himself. "Strike the question. I'm through with the witness."

He gave the jury a significant look;

hid a yawn; observed the clock, which marked the hour for adjournment.

The descending sun had kindled a fire in the window across the street. Mr. Duncan looked for the huge fly, but could not find it. He played with his heavy watch-charm, a lodge emblem. The judge was preparing to adjourn court.

One more night in the jury dormitory, mused Mr. Duncan. Another day should see the end of this funny trial. In the morning Conway probably would try his luck at what they called redirect examination; but it would be useless: likely the defense would get itself in a worse hole. You couldn't do anything with a fellow like Luke. There might be a little more testimony, perhaps on both sides. But what would it matter? Certainly there would be long, violent closing arguments. And they would matter less.

The case might as well be submitted this moment, if the other jurors felt as he did, and somehow he could have sworn that they did.

The judge would give them a lot of instructions. He would tell them that they had the right to—how was it worded?—*to take into consideration the demeanor of each witness, his apparent candor or lack of candor.* They would all right! Watch them. Luke. . . . Well, it might have been different—undoubtedly it would have been—had Luke turned out to be a witness like the defendant in that last robbery case. State versus Hopkins. And Hopkins had been a clean-cut young man who looked you straight in the eye and talked square - from - the - shoulder. Circumstances had been black in his case too—blacker perhaps than in this murder. But you believed Hopkins instinctively—even logically. Nobody would be idiot enough to believe Luke Rucker. The little rat had convicted himself. . . . Hopkins had been acquitted.

Otis Duncan halted his thoughts when the judge ordered the defendant removed and the jury taken out.

Luke Rucker left the witness-stand nervously, looking at the floor. On the

way to the door, where two deputies awaited him, he ran a gauntlet of condemnatory stares. His knees trembled.

IV

LATE the next evening Otis Duncan, released from his judicial duties, walked thoughtfully along the street that led from the court house. His collar was limp from the day's passive exertions; his cheeks were ruddy in the sultry twilight; his head was bent in contemplation until his several chins were quite distinct.

He felt out of sorts—somehow. Trials were irksome, nerve-grating things, if one happened to be a juror. And now he must hurry home, where the children would clatter, and his wife's shrill, insistent voice would bid him do this and that. He had expected to quit the jury term with a righteous feeling of duty well done. What did he feel instead? A mental condition which he wanted, in physical terms, to call a bad taste in his mouth. He didn't know precisely why. It was not merely the weight of responsibility for his verdicts. There was some other vague phase of the whole matter that worried him while it eluded him.

He thought of a place where he could get a drink, and debated whether to delay his home-going for this helpful purpose.

Well, Luke Rucker was guilty. He would hang. They had said so. Who could blame them? Of course the little numskull was guilty! The other jurors had said exactly what he had believed: that the other evidence didn't matter—*Luke had proved himself guilty.*

He deliberately banished Luke, but his mind dwelt on trials in general—courts, judges, lawyers, bailiffs, legal terms, dull passages from law books, odd tricks of procedure. . . . At least there was more justice in the world than there had been. Those charged with crime were given fairer treatment than in the past. Why, even the comparison was ridiculous! He recalled something he had read about justice in medieval times. Once there had been a method

named *trial by ordeal*. The judges, or whatever they were called, heated nine ploughshares, and placed them lengthwise, at unequal distances. The accused was brought forward, blindfolded, his feet bare. He stepped in among those white-hot ploughshares. If he got burned by any of them, he was guilty. But if he was lucky enough to miss the entire nine, he was innocent. . . . Otis Duncan's inclination to chuckle complaisantly at the absurdity of this ancient custom was thwarted by some obscure current of thought that stayed beneath the surface of his consciousness, but nevertheless chilled him strangely.

What ailed him? He must quit allowing nonsensical ideas to come into his head. Every man got a fair trial these days, even miserable, dirty, ragged lunkheads such as Luke. . . . After all, though, was Luke really guilty? Was he a murderer—or only a blundering fool who had run afoul of fate? Did he intend to kill Lanahan? Nobody ever would know—absolutely. What Luke had said could have happened: it was not impossible—but then you might say nothing was impossible. . . . that was quibbling. Still, suppose one Otis Duncan in the situation that Luke had described. Ah, but such an Otis Duncan would show his innocence on the witness-stand! His honesty would convince anyone. On the other hand, a half-wit

could have watched Luke testify and known he was guilty. . . . Was it possible that the theoretical defendant Otis Duncan could have made the same black impression on certain other juries? Yet he had just agreed, in his quibbling way, that anything was possible.

To hell with such rot! He was a clever business man, who was raising a fine family, had bought a pleasant home, had been elected an officer in the lodge, was respected, admired and liked in his community. Luke was a stupid lout, a filthy poacher, whom everybody despised. It was absurd to compare the two men. . . . But shouldn't some allowance be made for slow, dull minds? Was it fair to expect the dolts to make as good witnesses as the brilliant? Well, there was no excuse for not having an active brain, in these enlightened times. Look at the progress of science. Besides, in Luke's case it was ridiculous. There had been ample proof, aside from Luke's demeanor. . . . What did heated ploughshares have to do with it? Why did he keep thinking of them, and seeing Luke?

"Whatever it was made me decide," he muttered, "I *decided*, and that settles it. Get that? Then forget the rest."

Otis Duncan flung his hands out as if thrusting something from him.

Then he turned down a side street. He would go for the drink—for several.



A MAN should know the opinions of the woman he is to marry just as he should know the tenets of the religion he is to be converted to.



FIRST the bride selects her bridesmaid. Then the church. Then her trousseau. Then her lawyer. Then her detectives.



WHEN two women suddenly become friendly, it is a sign that some third woman has lost two friends.



The Mother

By Hannah Bryant

HER daughter was more intricately a part of her than were the blue, lacing veins that showed prominently across the back of her slender hands. On the day she was born to her, a few weeks after her husband's death, the child had become her subtle self, and it was as though every year, every day, the fiber of her being was more completely woven into the life of her daughter. She accepted the intensity of the relation as quietly as she accepted the order of the seasons and the numerical distinction of the passing years.

They were physical opposites. While she herself was small of stature, the daughter, growing to womanhood, attained a rare beauty and proportion of height. The mother was dark; the daughter had the radiancy of flame. Yet in disposition, in every mental characteristic, each was a mirror held up to the other; there was no trait, no sensibility, no depth or limitation of thought, which they did not possess in equal measure.

Even when the daughter fell in love and was married, there was no seriously defined breach in their community of interests. The mother accepted the changed condition not by the standards of personal appraisal but with the fullness of the other's happiness. Her son-in-law was all that she could reasonably hope for in a son-in-law. He was possessed of not a few of the attributes necessary in the man who would be a fit mate for her daughter; he was endowed with strength of character, with physical and mental health, and

with adequate material possessions. His bearing toward her was also all that was to be desired; he seemed to have an inherent understanding of their relationship, and accepted it tacitly and at its best value.

He prepared a beautiful little home for them in the outskirts of the city. The house was an architectural triumph, an appeal in dull brick for a just appreciation of colonial England. It stood upon a knoll, well back from the thoroughfare, in a great sweep of lawn, with three big elms leaning over its roof in enigmatical attention. Flowers in window-boxes colored variously the sills and ran in orderly riot on either side of the garden paths. The interior with its unostentatious glorifying of detail in arrangement and furnishing, and, as soon as the family had settled there, its atmosphere of cultured domesticity, was fully as alluring as the exterior.

At the end of two fulfilling years the family made preparations for an additional happiness: the birth of a child. But the child was born dead, and when the young mother, insisting on being told why she did not hear it cry, heard the truth, she turned her head a little, closed her eyes, and quietly died.

To the two remaining members of the family the details of the double funeral assumed enormous proportions. They steeped themselves in elaborate preparations which sufficed to fill to dreadful overflowing the emptiness of the first three days.

Then came the homecoming after the services at the grave and their

efforts to face the darkness of reality. Their grief, converged up to this point, now swept into different channels. The husband collapsed. The mother maintained a gentle though profound composure. She sat for long hours at a time staring at the blue, lacing veins that showed prominently across the back of her slender hands. But day by day, hour by hour, she grew slighter to the point of emaciation, and the shadows under her eyes deepened until they seemed to spread over the whole of her face. It was as though a part of her had died.

Thus matters went on for several weeks. The two were speaking, through the medium of their grief, different languages, and meeting hourly they met as strangers. Then one day the husband broke down in the mother's presence. She raised terribly expressionless eyes from her hands to regard him. Slowly a concern swept through her, slowly she arose, and after an untimed interval, and moving as though with great difficulty, she went to him and laid the frailness of her hand upon his shoulder.

That day marked the beginning of the change in her. She had seen for the first time how grief had wasted and broken him, and it was as though she had seen with the eyes of her daughter. An overwhelming desire to comfort him assailed her. It was a growing thing; something bigger than herself, and in the sea of it her own sorrow, and something of her own identity, was submerged and dispersed like foam. She lived in her solicitude; she fed herself upon it, and gradually she felt a strength, a feeling of life, returning to her. And before long she could believe that there was in it something of nourishment for him also. Aided by time, the innumerable things she found to do for his comfort, the potency of words of consolation that came to her lips—sometimes startling her with a subtlety that seemed not wholly her

own—were strengthening and comforting him.

Once he told her that in something she was saying he seemed to hear his wife speaking. . . . He could almost believe she was in the next room, that she opened an unopenable door and stood beside him. . . . The feeling grew upon him, and in their converse he referred to it again and again. He became dependent on the mother's company. During business hours, away from her and the background of the home, the sense of his loss engulfed him. He hurried home to find the mother always at hand and ready to shed upon him the peculiarly potent quality of her sympathy and support.

Understanding something of the range of her influence over him, and drifting away from the stress of her own bereavement, the mother was impelled into a consciousness of service that was very like contentment. A physical strength she had not known in years became hers. She was tireless about the house in her efforts to keep its affairs running with their accustomed cool precision. She moved from room to room, as her daughter had done, performing the innumerable, unnamable things that preserve the atmosphere of a home, and like her daughter, finding a sweet pride in the performance. She moved with youth in her step, and under her fallow skin the blood ran freely, coaxing the color into her cheeks and a quiet radiancy into her eyes.

The years that followed were not unhappy years. An indubitable though chastened peace pervaded the house that stood on a knoll in a great sweep of lawn, with three big elms leaning over its roof in enigmatical attention. As time passed the husband became less dependent on the mother. Much of his old taste for life returned to him. Business concerns engrossed him, and he threw himself into his awakened interests until the order of his days resumed

its normal trend. He did not demur when a change in his affairs necessitated his absence from the city for six months out of the twelve, eventually he found the break in the year, and the variety of life it imposed, much to his liking.

The mother during these prescient years was occupied with her pride in the home and in the religious application of her thought for her son-in-law's well-being. Each year was marked for her by two events, in preparation of which she spent the intervening months: his departure and his home-coming. The early physical exhilaration had left her, but a resultant mental stimulus reigned unabated. Always solicitous for his apparent comfort, she prodded her mind continually in her effort to think beyond her ideas for his obvious welfare.

He carried away from each leaving a breathing impression of her as she stood in the doorway of the home waving him good-bye; he returned to find her waiting there to welcome him. And often in her action, her speech, an expression of the eye, he was insistently reminded of her daughter—insistently, and at last, uncomfortably reminded.

For from one of his absences he

came home to tell her that soon he would be bringing home a wife.

He painstakingly refrained from turning his eyes in her direction as he told her. He had waited until the after-dinner hour, and was leaning back in his chair with as much ease as the occasion permitted, watching the writhing smoke of his cigar. She was standing near him—she had a habit of hovering about him as though she must always be ready to think and act for his comfort—and instantly she became motionless with attention, hearing him through without comment. As he paused she asked him in a tone of quick eagerness that surprised him a little, if he were quite, quite sure that this was for his greatest happiness.

He was quite sure.

She sat down with a motion more abrupt than was usually hers. A feeling of weariness came over her. It was something that tingled over her and left her with a sense of needed relaxation; something she hardly understood. She bent her head and examined the blue, lacing veins that showed prominently across the back of her hands.

Then she knew it for what it was. She was tired and was glad to be at rest.



Literature

By Roda Roda

ONE man alone—a lyric.

Two men—a ballad.

One man and one woman—a short story.

One man and two women—a novel.

Two men and one woman—a drama.

Two men and two women—a farce.



Ballet Kings

Leon Bakst's Opinions and Ideas on the Ballet and Dancing

By Louis Thomas

I

IT was getting dark. Nothing is more atrociously cityfied than the view overlooking Bryant Park in New York, when daylight is fading, when the electric signs are coming out, and when clouds, smoke, and gray twilight unite to make the sky vaguer above the tall buildings, puny trees of the park and architecture of the Public Library—solemn, alas! like the architecture of every nineteenth century temple.

Through the large bay window of Bakst's studio, I, a Frenchman, stood contemplating in bitterness of spirit this corner of New York.

"My dear friend," I broke out, "suppose we were to have a ballet this spring, on these sparse lawns, would it be as charming as the night fête at Poiret's?"

"There is a ballet in this park at noon every fine day," replied Bakst, "the ballet of stenographers and salespeople; they read the papers and do not look at the birds. It is the ballet of modern life. It will take a new genius to give it form and transpose it into the atmosphere of the theatre. And I know what will happen on the opening night: It will be like the first performance of the 'Sacre Du Printemps': the fools will break into gales of laughter; the artists will get angry, and while I call on the name of the Lord because my right-hand neighbor refuses to listen, Florent Schmitt will stand up in the orchestra rows—unless it happens to be

Léon Paul Fargue, the poet, or Erik Satie, or Ricardo Viñes—"

"And they will ungallantly and mercilessly insult the luxurious ladies who have dared to smile."

"Do you recollect the furious atmosphere of the 'Sacre Du Printemps'?"

"It was marvelous—a repetition of the memorable battle that raged the first night of 'Hernani.' I left voiceless, the waistcoat of my dress suit rumpled from my many gestures of defiance. It was splendid."

"New York would be delightful if only there was a little more fighting."

"Ah, how true, my dear friend: in New York I yearn for the battles that are fought in Europe. Here artists are too careful of their success: every morning, in the newspapers and magazines, there is no such thing as a death sentence, or a polite request for the immediate murder of an important contemporary. The gun has disappeared from political struggles; poison, threats and insults from artistic controversies. Life in the United States is terribly lacking in the picturesque."

"You will never grow old," smiled Bakst.

"I hope not. When one has been one of Shakespeare's jesters, it is forever. . . . But have you seen any ballets in New York?"

"I have, but they were either mediocre or frankly bad. It looks as though this country does not yet possess a feeling for the ballet—and more's the pity."

"And yet Americans are dance mad."

"That is what is so surprising in this country: that Americans, who have such a sense of dancing as a sport, pastime and amusement, have so little feeling for it as a spectacle."

"Yet a great many ballets are given in New York, at the opera and in the revues and music-halls."

"Yes, but two things so far have prevented a superior conception of the ballet in the United States: first, there is no effort to put a general idea, an intellectual and sentimental basis into each of these ballets—hence, they are nearly always a succession of steps and figures lacking unity or deep meaning; secondly, the ballet is commercialized, its standard lowered, brought down to the level of the music-hall and vaudeville stage, instead of an attempt being made to make of it an artistic expression sufficient in itself. General ideas and the basis of the ballet are converted into money, and turned into base coin for the use of the lowest public."

"A great many things are converted into money here. . . ."

"Some things," went on Bakst, "are made to be converted into money, others not. I have seen some of Fokine's ballets in New York. Fokine is undeniably an artist. Well, his ballets for this country are fragments of music-hall shows, and nothing more. It is pitiful to see an artist of his calibre lower his standard in this way, to satisfy the tastes, already out-of-date, of the stupidest public or the whims of a few impresarios."

"I would prefer to see real art in the music-hall."

"Nothing easier. It would be sufficient to discover a really intelligent music-hall manager, gifted with even greater commercial genius than his competitors, and he would realize that nothing is better business than true art in the music-hall, and that a real ballet would bring in a great deal of money. Perhaps the music-hall manager of my dreams does exist. In any case, so far as the United States is concerned, the

ballet is far from having given what it can give. And even my incomparable friend, Anna Pavlowa, who is the genius of the dance incarnate, presents in America things she would never dare give in Europe."

"I am of your opinion, and yet it must be admitted that she gives us the best ballets to be seen in the United States."

"In the kingdom of the innocents, the devil-may-care are kings. And, at least so far as the ballet is concerned, for the present it is not in the United States that models can be sought. In Pavlowa's case, the pity of it is that she is something more than a great artist and wonderful virtuoso: she is the last representative of the classical ballet, as Theophile Gautier understood it. She has gone to the very end of this tradition. She has been the Sylphide, as Taglioni was. The ballet, as she has conceived and realized it, was, if I may say so, the Rubicon Nijinski jumped. Pavlowa has a place in the history of the stage: when she is willing to be herself, she is the equal of the very greatest."

"I wish I were a prince and could offer her a theatre where she could dance, away from the obstacles and abasements that business brings to art."

"To such a theatre, where I can see you as manager, Mlle. Zambelli would have to be invited. She, too, is a follower of good tradition. She represents in her art what Caruso was in his."

"But she has had a little less advertising. . . ."

"You would also engage in your royal theatre, Karsavina and Spessiva. Then, too, there are a few stars in Russia at the present time."

"We would ask the Bolsheviks to allow them to come to us."

"As ballet master we would have Voisekovski; also that excellent technician but somewhat cold dancer, Idzikovski, Poles both of them."

"Would we engage the creator of the 'Legend of Joseph'?"

"Well, I don't know: as a dancer I

do not care for Massine. He is a clean-cut worker, with a great desire to conform to style, to tradition. But a cruel absence of temperament makes all his efforts fruitless, worthy though they are."

"It was a great mistake to present him as a successor of Nijinski."

"There has been no successor to Nijinski, and I do not know whether there ever will be. I am not referring to the dancer, who was incomparable, in strength, elegance, rapidity, sure technique and leaps. I am speaking of the technician. For Nijinski marks an epoch in the history of the ballet and of the stage. No one has surpassed him since his fatal illness."

II

THERE was nothing left to me to do but to allow Bakst to speak and revive my recollections, and it was with unequaled pleasure that I heard him again set forth what has been a part of the history of the Russian ballet.

"I have always thought and still think that Nijinski is—or rather was, since he must be considered as one dead—the true genius of the new dancing. The fragments, odds and ends of his inventions carefully gathered by too methodical successors, will never give that atmosphere of great art which emanated from Nijinski's every choregraphic thought. The great artist, who was at the same time an unsurpassed dancer and a ballet master full of genius, seemed from his earliest attempts a renovator of the art of Noverre. His conceptions, always daring and noble, instinctively avoided any tendency of too literary a character in plastic art. Now, since Nijinski, we have once again seen that literary—or if you prefer—intellectual excess in the ballet is the end of the art of dancing. The ultra-modern ballet, the ballet where there is no dancing and too much thinking, is the ballet's death sentence."

"It is the cubism of dancing."

"Exactly. And it deceives only

naïve, inartistic and abstract minds. Art is not geometry. The ballet is first of all dancing."

"Just as a true poet is always a musician and a musician who lacks feeling is a mere machine of sounds. True art is always concrete."

"Nijinski never went beyond these principles, although he would have been quite incapable of giving them such a philosophic dress."

"The important point was that he should bring a new form of art, and he brought it to us."

"He did," replied Bakst. "His invention, which springs entirely and in the most natural way from his choregraphic genius was the idea of dancing for dancing, or plastic posing for posing: he purified dancing by reducing it to its original element. Thus he gave us 'L'Après-midi d'un Faune.' He took his inspiration from Grecian vases and in his ballet as in those vases, movement is always dominated by beauty of line. The dancer moves, but is always beautiful, plastic, immortal. From the first, this ballet was perfection, and a new kind of perfection. Then Nijinski gave more complete scope to his views in that other ballet by Debussy, 'Jeux,' in which he took as a basis an athletic game, and adapted his idea not only to the motions of daily life, but to an athletic exercise. The highest peak of Nijinski's genius, however, is to be found in that strange ballet called 'Le Sacre Du Printemps', which is an admirable attempt at dancing close to the ground, a stamping dance if I may call it so, in which the artist tramples the ground instead of flying over it. Here Nijinski did not dance in the air, but danced the earth, treading it under him. Ah, after this, how meagre, how 'literary' seemed to me the version of the 'Sacre Du Printemps' imagined by Massine—scholastic exercises at times derived from Swedish gymnastics, showing clearly the tremendous difference there is between the spontaneous creation of genius and an imitation coldly thought out. It was exactly like the difference

between a Parthenon column, and those carefully measured but terribly cold copies that are the work of innumerable academic imitators of Greek genius."

"An artist who is not himself is nothing."

"That is why, perhaps, the true renovator of the ballet will spring up Heaven knows where and when. But without waiting for that original genius, whoever he may be, they might nevertheless give us in the United States, and particularly in New York, more interesting ballets than those that are shown."

"It would be possible to produce in the United States many more artistic shows than those that are to be seen. But a thousand malicious demons

cross artistic plans. And modern democratic States are not in the vein for original art creations."

"Let us leave sociology alone, my dear friend! It is a subject, I have noticed, on which artists do not disagree to any greater extent than professional sociologists. But it is a forbidden one for us. If we were tyrants, however. . . ."

"I should begin by planting real trees under your windows in Bryant Park."

"Trees in New York!" exclaimed Bakst, "Do you want to have us arrested as anarchists, as revolutionists! Come, let us rather go out and look at Broadway's illuminations. Perhaps there, too, may be found the subject of a new ballet."



Traces

By George O'Neil

YOU will not keep a sacramental shrine
Or one spare rose of reverence in your thought;
There is no realm there positively mine,
No tabernacle shields the cup I brought.

But there are things you cannot touch away,
And in the barter that may still go on
A breath, a murmur and a glance shall stay
No matter that you delve to have them gone,

There will be hours when earth is all at war
With the excited challenges of Spring,
When vibrance beating upward where you are
Shall catch and stir you like a rooted thing.

Life, then, should bring those touches tracing mine
Pale leaf . . . or shadow under leaves that shine.



THE best key to a man's actions is some woman's motives.

The Girdle of Virtue

By Parkhurst Whitney

I

A HUGE disc of pale gold appeared above the crests of the chestnut trees and cast delicate shadows on the grass and on the low porch where a small boy sat with gran'ma. There, presently, Mrs. Orlo Link joined them and began to speak of the things that seemed to interest the race of elders. Gran'ma rocked and knitted and said little, but it was plain that she was not incurious.

"I ain't goin' to stay a minute, but I knew you'd want to hear about Uncle Hank. . . . Conscious to the last and sort of troubled about his immortal soul. . . . No more than the just vengeance of the Lord. . . . They say that woman used to come to his farm and stay for days at a time. . . . He'll have to answer at the bar of judgment for that. . . . Saw her once and looked her straight in the eye and if she could've read my mind shed've hung her head for shame. . . . Handsome in a bold and brazen sort of way, but handsome is as handsome does. . . . They say he left her something in the will. . . . I declare I believe I'll see if the law can't prevent her profiting by her lewdness. . . . The funeral is Tuesday at the house. . . . Do you s'pose that hussy'll dare show her face? . . . He's to be laid out in his soldier clothes though he's wasted so they'll be a mite too loose for him. . . ."

Thus the summer night worked its spell upon Mrs. Link, while the bright moon moved slowly down the sky and a gentle breeze rustled the broad leaves of the chestnuts. She was engaged in

the pleasant task of sorting the spiritual garbage of the village, collected in pursuit of her duties as inspector of morals. So she had earned the name of a good woman, and every day she strengthened her claim to the title by reports of good deeds done, of vice routed and sinners brought to book. A small boy was familiar with this brilliant reputation, but now, as always, he regarded the figure in the shiny black skirt and stiff white waist with a sense of confusion. How she was fashioned underneath that garb of righteousness he never knew, for the dominant note of her costume was sounded by corsets of enormous length and astounding rigidity. Their massive outlines were clearly visible through waist and skirt, so that her head and feet seemed to be emerging from behind a high board fence. In time that ironclad garment seemed to engulf her; rummaging through his memories in after years, a small boy could recall few other physical characteristics; the corsets alone gave her significant outward substance.

Virtue, no doubt, need not be wrapped in a pretty package, but Mrs. Link invariably aroused in a small boy a feeling of repugnance that he could not reconcile with her moral worth. He knew how consistently she cried out against evil; how vigorously she fought the traffickers in rum; how loudly she prayed for the lambs that strayed out of the fold and into the opera house when barnstorming troupes came to the village; how precisely at twenty minutes past ten o'clock every Sunday morning she marched piously

to church, convoyed by the modestly spruce Mr. Orlo Link. All those virtues were well known, and for them, doubtless, she was to be esteemed. Nevertheless, something unpleasant emanated from her.

Something unpleasant emanated from her now, as she talked of Uncle Hank. The news of his death came to a small boy as a serious personal loss. He was one of those rare elders who could really enter the separate world of childhood and be received there as an equal. Uncle Hank recognized this honor, and paid well for it with brusque, bluff humor and thrilling reminiscences of the days of '61, of battle and death and gallant charge. The death of so useful a person, a small boy felt, should cause general grief; yet in the grunt that occasionally escaped from Mrs. Link he could detect a note of gloating. He didn't know why Uncle Hank, dead of honorable old wounds, should be troubled about his immortal soul; but he did realize that Mrs. Link seemed to enjoy the veteran's concern.

It was in such ways that the good woman repulsed a small boy and confused his opinion of her; she sat there in the soft, warm darkness and poured slops into the clear stream of his dreams.

II

THE leaves of the chestnuts were no longer broad and green; brown and shriveled, they scattered before the driving winds and snows of November. Now a small boy was driven indoors for some of his pleasures, but since the gods had been unusually beneficent he was not conscious of unbearable hardship. They had provided, through the medium of the Y. M. C. A., a magnificent table equipped for indoor croquet; that is, it began as indoor croquet, but some forgotten genius appeared one day with a whittled broomstick, and thereafter the game assumed the alluring guise of pool.

The significance of that transforma-

tion is only to be appreciated by one who was a small boy in a village of twenty-five years ago; for of course America is no longer ruled by the naive and the intolerant. In those old, illiberal days, pool was wickedness and depravity, and whosoever succumbed to its fascinations did so at the risk of his worldly reputation and even of his immortal soul. The opprobrium attached to pool was, indeed, one of the most puzzling moral problems with which a small boy had to contend. It was in vain for him to argue with his gran'ma, that pool was just a game like baseball or prisoners' base; on the contrary, he was assured, it was a vicious and immoral thing, a low associate of rum and a device of the devil to tempt men to destruction. It is encouraging to look about nowadays and see the republic rid of all such abysmal prejudices.

So it was with a tingling sense of dallying with evil that a small boy played the bastard game in the dark recreation room at the Y. M. C. A. It was croquet, but none the less it was possible to go through the motions of playing pool; to imitate the postures of those unregenerates who could be seen at the real thing in the room adjoining the Commercial House bar. Tasting this strange delight, he was seized with the high passion of the young for the new toy. His interest increased with his dexterity, and the long winter unfolded before him as an unending game of pool. Such a fever was kindled in him, in fact, that he fell into the trap that awaits all over-enthusiastic persons; for few things are certain in this world, except possibly the devotion to good works of such as Mrs. Orlo Link.

A black shawl clung precariously to her shoulders as, bareheaded, she bounced into gran'ma's sitting room one midwinter evening. Even a small boy, reluctantly occupied with next day's school work, could see that the spirit behind the powerful corsets was aflame with some unusually high moral resolve.

"They say those younguns are playin' pool in the Y. M. C. A.," she announced abruptly.

"No!" Gran'ma pushed the spectacles up her nose and stared amazed at her neighbor. When the shock had subsided she turned to a small boy.

"Is that so?" she asked.

Was it true, her tone implied, that her grandson was given to abominable practices?

"Wy, it's only indoor croquet," he protested; but feebly, for a great fear was upon him.

"It *was* indoor croquet," Mrs. Link corrected. "They say those younguns have got pool cues and when nobody's around they fix the table so's they can play pool."

"I never heard of such a thing," exclaimed gran'ma. She directed stern glances at her grandson, across the rims of her lagging spectacles. "Have you been playing pool?"

"Wy, it's on'y indoor croquet," he repeated. "It's just indoor croquet, on'y we got some old broomsticks to hit the balls with. You play it just like you play outdoor croquet, on'y you play it on a table and use a broomstick instead of a mallet."

"They say they play pool when nobody's around," Mrs. Link reiterated.

"Well, but you can't play pool on a croquet table, can you?" a small boy argued. "If it's a croquet table you can on'y play croquet on it, can't you?"

A wailing note of despair crept into his voice; his fund of patience was hardly equal to the appalling ignorance of his elders.

"The Y. M. sec'etary knows it's on'y croquet," he concluded.

"Then he'd ought to get a good talkin' to," snapped Mrs. Link. "The idea, lettin' those innocents play pool! If it ain't stopped I'll go before the trustees."

A small boy was overwhelmed with futility. It was true that the game was make-believe pool; but even so, where was the evil since it served to speed the long winter days in such pleasant fashion? He was prepared to argue

convincingly, but he knew that his words would fare poorly in this devouring flame of moral indignation. In the eyes of Mrs. Link and gran'ma, pool was an abomination, and nothing he could do or say would save the broomstick cues. Sulkily, he bowed his head and acknowledged defeat; and when next he visited the Y. M. C. A., a sign posted above the croquet table proved that his reasoning had been sound.

III

THERE are no plains on the graph of childhood; there are only high peaks of elation and deep valleys of depression, and the recording instrument zig-zags swiftly. The tragic moment assumes cataclysmic proportions, but presently a compensation arrives, and all, or nearly, all is well again. So, the dog, Nipper, arrived to take the place of make-believe pool.

Until one winter afternoon, when a small boy returned from skating on the mill pond, Nipper lived with an elderly couple in the outskirts of the village. It may be that they regarded him as their own, but no such foolish thought was in the dog's mind. He was merely waiting for his affinity, and when he and a small boy looked upon each other for the first time, each knew that the perfect mate in all the world had been found. Nipper deserted the old folks and followed a small boy home, and neither ever questioned the ethics of the act; it was natural, inevitable.

Nipper was a fond dog, but he had lived long enough and suffered enough to rid himself of a too fond, too foolish trust in human nature. In place of that illusion he had cultivated a quality which is of the highest wisdom and makes great dogs and great men; he could forgive and forget. Nipper received his share of cuffs, even from his young master, but he understood and never cherished resentment for long. He was not proud, for his lineage was uncertain; but what Mr. Booth Tarkington has called the singular series of

mesalliances that produced him, also gave him an intelligence, a variety that is not to be found in dogs that never go outside the family. In brief he was the immemorial associate of youth; he was just a dog, and his color scheme was light brown.

Nipper was not established in his new home without difficulties. Gran'ma loosed her hens late every day to forage in her yard, and the dog seemed to regard the custom as a spectacle arranged for his benefit. He had a passion for hens, a harmless delight in worrying them, which a small boy was glad to indulge him in. Hens always seemed to him the most repulsive, the basest of living things. He liked them not at all, neither alive nor in his gran'ma's eternal fricasees. He hated their silly cacklings, their disgusting personal habits, their stupid, panicky ways. If Nipper liked to chase them, what better purpose could they serve? If they amused his dog, then at last he had found some justification for their existence. Gran'ma, however, held a different opinion; hens were her passion, too, but it was a fond, protective passion. And since she also held the whip hand over her grandson, Nipper's place behind the kitchen stove was in jeopardy until a compromise was effected whereby the dog was to be kept in leash during the hour that the hens had the freedom of the premises.

The matter of keeping the dog off the trail of the cackling creatures that roamed Mrs. Orlo Link's lawn was not so easily adjusted. Her hens kept no regular hours; they strayed at will. So, at any moment of the day, a brown streak might be seen crossing the road a few yards behind a flapping, squawking leghorn bound for the protection of Mrs. Link's hen coop. At such times, a careful observer might have seen that good woman's window curtains flutter; but a small boy, though he knew that trouble was likely to follow, couldn't always deny his dog, nor his own instincts. . . . Besides, these were Mrs. Link's hens.

He came home from school one afternoon, full of fascinating plans for an expedition into the snowy woods. He had a recurrence of the belief that a fast moving rabbit could be brought down with a shot from the small calibre revolver hidden in the barn. It was a never to be realized ambition, but it lured him steadily. Nipper, of course, would go along to break the game out of cover.

"He' Nip!"

He set up the customary call some distance from home. Presently, unless Nipper were lying in the old soap box behind the kitchen stove, he would emerge from the barn, from around a corner of the house, bark a cheerful response and streak down the street to meet his master. There was no such response this afternoon, and a small boy went into the house and repeated the summons. Again there was no response; nor had gran'ma seen the dog.

This was vexatious; the hunt was likely to be ruined by delay. Darn that dog. Why, a dog always ought to be home, ready for instant service. A small boy ran out to the barn, full of wrath, promising Nipper a cuff on the ear when he was found. Nor was his anger dissipated when he discovered Nipper lying under the manger in the disused stall. What did that darn dog mean by not coming when he was called?

"Here, sir, come out o' that! Didn't you hear me callin'? Come out here!"

Nipper's sides heaved, but his curly tail wagged no response as a small boy strode wrathfully toward him. The dog was stretched out stiffly on his flanks, and he was breathing heavily. A thin trickle of saliva dripped from his distended jaws and collected in a little pool on the stable floor. The brown eyes were open and staring, but there was no spark of recognition in them.

A small boy noted these peculiar things and realized that all was not well with his friend. He hurried to the house and summoned gran'ma. She

came, wiping her hands on her apron, and ventured a diagnosis.

"Poisoned!"

"How?" a small boy gasped.

"Well," gran'ma answered slowly, "I expect somebody gave it to him."

"Who?"

"Well," gran'ma was again judicious and deliberate, "I might guess, but I might be wrong, so I won't say. But it was a mean trick, a nasty, mean trick."

She patted her grandson's head and took command of a situation that was beyond his control. "You run up on the hill as fast as you can and tell Doc Allen to come down. I'll take Nipper in the house and lay him by the stove. Maybe we can cure him yet."

She removed her apron and bundled the stricken dog in it.

"Yes," she observed once more, "it was a nasty, mean trick."

A small boy ran until he breathed as painfully as Nipper. Between gasps he told Doc Allen of the tragedy and implored him to hurry. The kindly veterinarian hitched his horse and drove a small boy home, and there confirmed gran'ma's diagnosis. Nipper was suffering from arsenic poisoning, probably administered in a piece of meat. Doc would leave some medicine which was to be given every fifteen minutes. . . . It might do some good . . . but he was afraid . . . not much chance. . . .

Nipper's sides ceased to heave as gran'ma made preparations for supper. Dry-eyed, still dazed, a small boy witnessed the end and received gran'ma's reluctant confirmation. For the briefest period he remained on his knees and stared at the quiet brown body. Then the hard truth entered him and he fled to his bedroom. He buried his head in the pillow and great gusts of sobbing shook him. It was the supreme sorrow of his childhood; the irrevocable nature of the tragedy was almost unbearable.

Gran'ma knocked at his door and asked if he would eat supper. No? . . . Well, then, she would put some victuals in the oven. . . . When he was ready. . . .

After a time the tears ceased to flow

S. S.—July—8

and his mind resumed its normal functions. Suspicion had been there all the time; now he drew it out and found it justified. He knew who had done this terrible thing. . . . Damn her! . . . Damn her to hell! . . . Damn her forever! . . .

IV

THE gutters ran with thawing snow, and a small boy played at some game in which the road figured as a deep, swift-flowing river, when he was aware of the solicitous voice of Dora Hayes. He turned shyly to welcome her. . . . Yes, she was back. . . . Oh, she had been to big cities, lots of places, far away places. . . . And how was a small boy? . . . Growing like a weed, she could see that. . . . So big she hardly knew him. . . . More such kindly comment, the prerogative of elders to utter, before she moved on and left a small boy to stare after her, strangely, unaccountably attracted. So she had always stirred him, this tall, lithe creature with the slow, caressing smile. He had missed her when she left the village, and was bothered by the conspiracy of silence surrounding her departure. Mrs. Link, to be sure, referred to her occasionally, but Mrs. Link's references were either obscure or, if they were not, he could not agree with them. He didn't regard Dora Hayes as a bad woman, nor did he want her to be driven out of town. Mrs. Link was always threatening to drive people out of town, anyway; it was one of her ways of doing good. And how could such a beautiful lady as Dora Hayes be bad? The thought was not to be entertained.

Nevertheless, he was puzzled and curious and found it desirable to compare notes with his friend, Beany Sheldon. Beany was in the same state of unsatisfied curiosity, and so the two consulted an older boy, who was really helpful. The information which he gave them should have arrayed a small boy on the side of Mrs. Orlo Link, but it didn't. He was no game for Dora

Hayes, but he felt her rare power to charm the male and paid tribute to it. She was born a daughter of joy, acquiesced in her seduction, if she did not provoke it, and thereafter honored an ancient profession with a rich, warm, lovable spirit. The untaught child of a railroad laborer, she became eventually the companion of a distinguished American. Long afterward a small boy realized what havoc this strange woman must have wrought among the males of the village; what heart-burning she must have inspired in their ill-favored dames, before she felt her power and followed her fortunes out into the world.

The visit with Dora Hayes broke the continuity of his fame, and he retired to the kitchen and sampled a new baking of sugar cookies. He was followed there almost immediately by Mrs. Link. It seemed that just by chance, by the merest chance, she had been looking out of her window when Dora Hayes came down the street.

"Wha'd she have to say?" Mrs. Link inquired.

"Wy, nothin' much," said a small boy, his mouth full of sugar cookie.

"She stopped and spoke to you," Mrs. Link insisted. "She must've said somethin'."

"Well, she said she was back," he admitted.

Mrs. Link grunted unpleasantly. "She didn't have to tell anybody that." She regarded him suspiciously, as though he were holding some succulent item from her, and turned reluctantly to gran'ma.

"Wha's she back for, do you s'pose?
 . . . For no good, I'll warrant. . . .
 Flaunting her sinfulness in our faces.
 . . . Dressed to kill. . . . Fur coat
 must've cost a mint of money. . . .
 Never came by it honestly. . . . Up
 to her old ways, I dessay. . . . Ought
 to be driven out of town. . . . S'pose
 old Elmer Holliday'll be chasin' her
 again. . . . Used to drive his own
 grocery wagon to her house. . . . Such
 goings on. . . . Shameful. . . ."

Shameful, indeed; but a small boy

got the incredible impression that Mrs. Link smacked her lips as these phrases poured out of her mouth.

V

CLUSTERS of heavy blossoms appeared in the chestnut trees; a carpet of green, miraculously soft and inviting, spread itself about gran'ma's house; fat robins uttered their sweet, clear calls and pecked at the moist earth; hardy flowers, the crocus, the tulip and the blood root, splashed the countryside with gay colors; ladies of the village appeared in brilliant creations of Miss Spooner, the milliner, and their men folk discarded winter blacks for light top coats and suits that shouted a little. During the day the rake and the spade were busy in lawn and garden, and the smell of green and growing things was pleasantly blended with the acrid tang of burning leaves. In the evening, under the moon, young men and their adored ones strolled about the streets and talked in undertones, to the accompaniment of giggling and light remonstrances from the ladies. It was spring, and nature was at her old, old tricks. Strange urges were in the air.

A small boy felt these urges and translated them into preparations for the baseball season. After supper he and Beany Sheldon met in the road in front of gran'ma's house and unlimbered their arms with a brisk game of catch. They played steadily until darkness, ignoring passersby but not entirely unconscious of them. Occasionally a passerby would become a spectator for the moment, and one of these, a gentleman, even interrupted the boys to inquire if they were playing catch. They assured him that he had indeed guessed correctly, and presently he went his way, seemingly satisfied.

This gentleman was not so modishly attired as some of the passersby; his shoes did not run to pin points, as the fashion of the day required; nor did he wear the stylish tan topcoat that barely covered the seat of the trousers. Still he was sprucely, if conservatively,

dressed, and one might have thought that he, too, was going wooing; that he, too, in response to the strange urges of nature, was setting out to find his mate. Such a thought, however, would only have occurred to a stranger, for all villagers knew that this gentleman had long been happily mated. He was the husband of that good woman, Mrs. Orlo Link; he did something connected with the baths at the water cure, but otherwise was not clearly defined in a small boy's world.

When darkness came, the ball players leaned against a chestnut tree and talked, nervously stubbing the soft earth with their toes. They talked in undertones, which was well, perhaps; if they had raised their voices the neighborhood might have been startled by their knowledge of current topics.

"Willie Emmet saw old man Holliday sneakin' out one night," said Beany at one period of the discussion.

"Yeah?"

Their voices dropped to lower undertones and finally were hushed. A small boy deposited his glove and ball in a corner of gran'ma's porch and rejoined Beany under the chestnut tree. They moved cautiously away from the house, keeping in the shadow of the great trees, and then broke into an easy trot that soon brought them to a street that paralleled the railroad. They followed this street west until the railroad, swerving, bisected it. Here they halted, reconnoitred and eventually crossed the tracks and crawled along a wire fence that marked the boundary of the railroad property. When they ceased to move they were about seventy-five feet from a light gleaming faintly through the curtained window of a small, unpainted house. It was the home of the widow of Paddy Hayes and, occasionally, of his daughter Dora.

The two boys watched this house intently, now silent, now talking in excited whispers.

"I gotta be goin' home, I guess," a small boy whispered after some time had passed in this fashion.

"Sh!" cautioned Beany. "Look."

A door closed with a faint grating sound, and a figure disengaged itself from the darkness a moment later. It moved slowly and noiselessly, and two small boys, breathless and not a little frightened, saw that it was not going toward the road, but was crossing the open field in their direction. They squirmed close to the moist, smelly earth and buried their faces in the dark outlines of their coats.

The wires squeaked and vibrated and told them that the figure was now getting over the fence. Then there was a soft thud on the ground, followed by a scuffling sound that indicated crossing the stony bed of the railroad tracks.

A small boy raised his head and looked around, but the figure was again enveloped in the night, moving somewhere out in the open fields. He looked at his companion then, and saw a knowing grin on Beany's broad face.

"Didju see who it was?" that conspirator asked.

"I didn' dast look up," a small boy confessed. "Gee, he came close, didn' he? . . . Didju see?"

"Sure," said Beany proudly.

"Who?"

"Betcha can't guess?"

"Old Man Holliday?"

"Naw. . . . Orlo Link."

VI

A TERRIBLE weapon was placed in a small boy's hands, but he never used it. It may be that some instinctive sense of the necessity for masculine loyalty caused him to withhold his fire; whatever the reason, and it isn't important, anyway, he never told. As for the meaning of what he and Beany had come upon, he realized that Nipper had been revenged; and, further, that Mr. Orlo Link had been definitely established as a personage in his youthful vision. More penetrating conclusions were beyond him; the night's adventure was just another scene in that puzzling pageant of life that children watch more closely and with sharper eyes than their elders know.

Years passed and a day came when the wicked ceased troubling Mrs. Link. Watching the cortège pass, an older boy was not sorry to see her go, nor sorry that the opportunity to blast her was lost forever. Now, he knew, of course, that it was tragedy he had witnessed long ago on a night in spring; while a good woman had been at the front, fighting the battle of moral perfection for all the world, he had seen her be-

trayed by the trusted troops stationed in her very citadel. Meditating upon this treacherous act, he began to wonder if the cause of the tragedy was not home-made as well. Perhaps, he reasoned, the cause of virtue had been better served if Mrs. Link had used some of the arts of Dora Hayes, whom she so despised—and envied a little? If the good woman had worn more seductive corsets. . . . Who knows? . . .



I Would Not Be Free

By Lynn Riggs

HOW could I note these tender passing things:
 Red roofs aswim behind the trailing mist,
 And pear trees stirred with sweet rememberings
 Of somber boughs by Spring's fire fingers kissed?
 How could I note these things when I was pressed
 By the intense nearness of warm human faces?
 How could these lure when lovely lips confessed
 Some of the stolen fire from skyless places?

O faces, lips, eyes, hands of human souls—
 Not that I deliberate, then your grip clings
 To me as I steer through the ambushed shoals
 And calmer waters of my life's wanderings:
 I am chosen by you—and I would not be free
 Of the stark shackles of your proximity!



A WOMAN has a hard time of it in life. If she marries a man that other women like she is not safe. If she marries one that other women dislike she is not happy.



THE man who thrills with delight when he beholds a beautiful woman is fit for great and perilous enterprises.



THE scandal-monger is often merely jealous. She is angry that it didn't happen to her.



A Rainy Morning

By Daniel Ulrich

HE had been constrained to stay indoors that morning, when he particularly wanted to go down to Simon Hartel's. On a bleak, rainy day such as this, Simon's low-ceilinged tobacco shop overflowed with talented story-tellers. Doubtless his absence would be deplored, for with sufficient encouragement he would sometimes help along with one or two choice yarns.

Because he had come very close to dying with pneumonia two years previously, his daughter-in-law was overzealous in guarding his health. She had, with untiring devotion, brought him through that sickness, and he must show his gratitude by humbly obeying her mandates. A marvelous little woman was Alice, but he at times was heartily glad that she was his son's wife and not his own. Of course, she never forgot that she lived under his roof, that it was he who had made the money that gave them their substantial place in the town's society. But she took advantage of the modern woman's prerogative to assume benevolent dictatorship, and there were times that he could not help comparing her unfavorably with his own departed wife.

The trouble was that she wanted him to act more realistically the role of an octogenarian. Nothing would have pleased her more, he imagined, than to have ensconced him in an invalid's chair for the rest of his days and plied him with medicines and broths. A born nurse, it was a shame that she had grudgingly given to the world but one child, his granddaughter Christine. And Christine was twenty-two, soon to

be married, so there was little hope of other grandchildren coming to gladden his declining days. To be sure, he had two married daughters who had done much better in the way of progeny, but that did not help to perpetuate his sterling patronymic.

He wandered into the kitchen, where Christine was under tutelage to the cook. Her betrothed, he had once observed, had a glorious past and a brilliant future, but a negligible present. For that reason she must learn the household arts.

They paid scant attention to him. A white table-cloth was covered with fat hot cookies. He sampled one and then another with the air of a connoisseur. He had eaten thousands of cookies in his day and found these fairly palatable. He ate several more. Then Christine interposed.

"Grandpa, you know they're not good for you fresh from the oven. At least wait until they have cooled off a little."

"Never hurt me in my life," he countered boastfully. "Stomachs weren't made of putty in the old days."

"Cook, what shall we do with him?" Christine asked.

"Chuck him out," the cook prescribed laconically.

Christine stuffed one more cookie into his mouth and led him to the door. He was over-fond of Christine, though he feared she was already observing her mother closely in the matter of husband-training. Since her engagement he had noticed a change in her. Well, everything was reduced to rule and precept these days, he supposed it filled the needs of the younger genera-

tions. He was glad that he had lived in a freer day, however, when a man dared be himself. He had been a gallant man, and still was, though to little purpose. It was deplorable that age should be looked upon as the deathbed of virility.

He wondered what the maid might be doing. Then the buzz of a vacuum cleaner told him. He walked to the living-room door and silently watched the busy servant for a minute. She also disregarded him, but that was only a little trick she had copied from the cook. He had seen prettier servant girls in his time, but Lydia was well-formed, and not too modest in the cut of her waist.

"Well, how's your Adonis these days, Lydia?" he asked brusquely.

"My which?" Lydia wanted to know.

"Your beau?"

"Oh, he's all right."

"Is he working?"

"Not yet."

"I suppose he's living on love."

"Now what do you mean by that, Mr. Smith?"

"Oh, nothing. I hope you never let him kiss you, Lydia."

"No, never, Mr. Smith."

"Are you sure?"

"No, I—"

"Oh, you're not sure?"

"I mean—"

"Does he ever do anything else, Lydia?"

"Mr. Smith!"

"I thought perhaps he takes you to the movies now and then. But of course he can't if he's not working."

Lydia blushed rosily and giggled.

"Let me help you, Lydia. I always wanted to learn to run one of these machines."

"I haven't time to fool now, Mr. Smith. If I'm not finished by the time Mrs. Smith gets back—here, Mr. Smith—don't! . . . *Mr. Smith!*"

Christine's voice came sharply from the kitchen.

"Grandpa! What in the world are you doing?"

He resented that. Alice also had a

notion that he tried to take liberties with the servant. Never in his life had he done that. He had his faults, but they did not run in that direction.

He emerged from the living-room.

"I tried to run the cleaner," he explained coolly, "and gave it too much power. It ran over Lydia's toes. That's all."

"Well, please don't bother her," Christine reproved. "We have a great deal of work to-day. Why don't you go upstairs and read until the rain is over?"

"I've read my paper," he replied.

"But there are hundreds of books," Christine suggested.

"Books make me tired. I'd go to sleep in five minutes."

"Then go to sleep."

"Christine, your grandfather begs permission to remain awake."

Christine ducked back into the kitchen and returned with two cookies.

"If you promise to go upstairs and remain there until we call you for lunch," she bribed.

He accepted the cookies and mounted the long flight of stairs munching them.

Ah, if only they had not insisted on electrifying the newel. Here would be something to amuse him. Sliding down the balustrade had been great fun, especially when that hoydenish cousin of his came over. He had been in love with her those days. When he tried to kiss her she clawed him, kicked him, pulled his hair, sometimes even succeeding in throwing him on his back and driving the breath out of him with her knee. Then when he had had enough she fell on his neck and kissed him rapturously. She was dead now from too many operations. Strange how she had changed in later years.

There was nothing to do but idle in his room until time for luncheon. He feared it would be a very slapdash affair to-day. His was no birdlike maw such as the women pretended to have on busy days.

He might go into the attic. There were many interesting things there,

gathered through several generations. Alice was always threatening to make a clean sweep of those fascinating relics ever since the accident. But it was tacitly understood that he confine himself to the first two floors. All because about a year ago he had one afternoon taken a trip there and thought it would be perfectly safe to smoke his pipe. The brave fire lads had done heroic work, and the damage had cost him less than a hundred dollars. It was childish of them to fear that he might repeat the experiment. But, after all, he had seen everything countless times, and had read all the old letters and papers he could find.

He passed Christine's room on the way to his own. The door was ajar and he glanced in.

A young girl's room is an alluring spot. The walls were a veritable gallery of romantic scenes, relieved by a few likenesses of saintly men. The subtle odors that drifted through the open door could not be resisted. He walked in noiselessly. All around him were signs of preparation for the wedding. Everything overflowed with soft mysterious things. As Christine had left several drawers and a cedar chest open, there could be no harm in peeping into them and passing a caressing hand over the filmy garments.

Next, the dressing table struck his fancy. It was littered with objects utilitarian and ornamental. He sat down before it and tried one of Christine's brushes on his white hair. Unlike most old men, he had a fine wavy thatch. He was proud of it. Was it not incontestable proof that he had lived wisely?

Powders and perfumes, creams and rouge passed under his inspection and appraisal. Ah! a box of chocolates. There were times that he had an intense craving for them. He felt that craving overtake him now. But he dare not take too many. Christine had sharp eyes. Let anything be missing about the house and the blame straightway fell on him. Had Alice seen fit to have three or four sons, this

martyrdom would have been spared him.

On the dressing table there also lay a book. He gave it an indifferent glance. How feeble were books compared with the luscious stories of the tobacco shop! Its title, "The Bride," caused him to smile sarcastically. A story to put Christine in the proper frame of mind, he reflected. He opened it and read a few words. Rather a different kind of book, after all. He read on steadily for perhaps an hour.

A footbeat in the hall startled him. Lifting his eyes he saw Christine's reflection in the glass. She appeared surprised to find him there. He closed the book and rose. A splash of sunlight lay on the rug.

"Well, the rain's over," he remarked serenely.

Christine's eye fell on the book. That was unfortunate, but there had been no time to put it back where he found it. She snatched it up, blushing painfully, and tossed it into a drawer.

"I'm astonished, grandpa," she said in a hurt little voice. Then she walked to a window to hide her confusion.

"You told me to read a book," he averred, trying to pass it off lightly.

She continued to gaze out of the window without replying.

"Well, I had just this minute come into your room to look for one."

"Grandpa, how can you fib so glibly?" she rebuked. "Besides, there are scores in the library that you've never read."

"But you made me promise to stay up here until you called me," he replied triumphantly.

"Then how about the bookcases in your room? I'm sure there are some there that you could read to advantage." She turned to him with a mocking smile lurking in her lovely eyes. "Hans Christian Andersen, for instance."

He pondered that at length, rumpling his hair.

"That's a sharp one, Christine," he applauded. "You're a Smith all right,

a Smith through and through. Too bad there aren't more like you."

He put his arm around her. "I'm forgiven this time, little one?"

Christine disengaged herself hastily. "This time, but not the next," she warned. Then she fell to tidying her

room, and he knew that he might as well depart before she ordered him out.

When over the threshold he turned for a parting sally.

"Fairy tales, Christine? And I stumbled on nursery rhymes instead!"



Prelude

By Paul Eldridge

LOGIC, indefatigable Ant, built a magnificent Castle. Walls of purest reason, roofs of indisputable axioms, gates of mighty truths. And what a lovely garden! Roses and dahlias and sweet peas—all of the choicest ideas, spreading an intoxicating perfume of rarest rhetoric. And the weathercock! More sensitive than a dove's down in the mouth of the winds. A weathercock of dazzling arguments.

Futility, patient Ox, was ruminating. His large soft cheeks shook lightly, his lips were pasted with a creamy foam, drops of which fell now and then, silently, to the ground.

Logic, indefatigable Ant, looked at the Castle and exclaimed: "Into Eternity!"

Futility, patient Ox, raised one hoof lazily, and lowered it. . . . The magnificent and eternal Castle mingled with another bit of mud. . . .

Logic, indefatigable Ant, escaped from the ruins, and immediately recommenced, a little further, the building of another magnificent and eternal Castle.

Futility, patient Ox, continued to ruminate. Drops of creamy foam fell now and then, silently to the ground.



The Wanderer

By Amanda Benjamin Hall

HE'S such a wanderer in his thoughts
That no one can keep pace;
So strangely he will talk of Crete,
Of Candia and Thrace!

*He will not take me where he goes,
He's deaf to me and blind.
Always, I am left at home
Sitting in my mind. . . .*

Auto-Psychoanalysis Of A Wrong-Thinker

By *Walter E. Sagmaster*

I

LIFE proper, in the general sense of the term, comprising those socially covenanted interactions between human beings whose sole aim seems to be a "happy marriage," a "good job" and three "square" meals a day, appalls me. I am so appalled by it that I scarcely have time to be revolted, and besides, I cannot seem to muster the necessary exertion to be revolted.

II

FOR me there are but four things in the universe, and they are, in the order of their importance: harmony, rhythm, geometry and color. Concerning the common desires of all animals (and plants, too, for that matter): sex and food—as I have little or no control over either, I assume little or no responsibility for either. Such things I leave to God; and this is not meant to be disrespectful or disparaging, for, all in all, sex and food seem to me to be pretty good fuel, and one can't run machines on imagination.

My universe is not one in which a man strives either for the good, the bad or the indifferent. It is not one wherein a man increases the annual output of baby shoes for the honor and glory of God; nor one wherein a man builds skyscrapers half a dozen stories higher than those of the previous year; nor one wherein a man invents a new

style bathtub; nor one wherein a method is discovered to teach the farm boys higher accountancy. My universe is simply one of circles, rhomboids, cones, squares, parallelograms, eccentrics; of melodies, counterpoints, fugues, symphonies; of reds, blues, yellows, blacks—and their million-odd variants; and of a few more or less commonly known odors. There are ideas in my universe, both my own and those of other men, and those which are a combination of the two—the last classification being most assuredly the largest; but all of them are either direct emanations of or directly dependent upon the four items in my universe already mentioned.

My estimation of men runs in proportion as their conception of the universe parallels my own. I have not found anyone who has *exactly* the same conception of the universe as I have, which is just as well, for there is not room on earth for two of us—just as there is not room on earth for two of anything exactly alike, which is one of the reasons why there are no two things exactly alike on earth. . . .

III

THERE is but one valid philosophy: hedonism. There is but one valid hedonism: individualism. There is but one valid individualism: self-expression.

Beyond the individual's alternate passion for and the satisfaction of his passion for self-expression, or, more narrowly, "work," there is no rhyme or

reason in life. Life is simply its own reason. Circumstances have made it what it is, just as every man's every thought is circumstantial, and as inevitable as spring fever.

There is but one valid evolution: mechanical evolution. Superficial effects may at times appear puzzling, but in the end determinism always comes out with the old flag flying and at least one of the drumheads in working order. Man is the victim of circumstances. He blames this on his companion—God—whereas God is as much a victim as he is himself, which fact the entire scientific findings of the last eighty years irrevocably substantiate.

IV

ART is the telepathic shorthand by means of which one human being transmits to others the effect upon him of the four elements in life I have cited: harmony, rhythm, geometry and color. Art must not be considered as artificial beauty in contradistinction to the so-called "natural" beauty of the material universe. This is an error peculiar to short-circuit thinkers. Art is as much a product of circumstance, as much a result of Nature, as a tree. That God made the woods and man the garden, and that therefore the garden is artificial and the woods natural is very hollow stuff, promulgated only by people who forget for the moment that God is man, and vice versa.

It does not reform me that you point out the supremacy of the rugged beauty of Nature over the more formal beauty of a garden. I only reply, with all proper diffidence, that in this particular case it would seem that perfection has gone about as far as it may well go. And then I most respectfully ask you if rugged Nature can produce a poem, or a symphony, or a painting? . . .

V

I DO not know what happens after death. I consider it both futile and unhealthy to think about the matter. What

happened before life is a subject just as interesting to me, and ten times as profitable, and a thousand times as sane.

VI

ABOVE all things on earth I despise sentimentality—and its three hideous little brothers: "homeyness," "good-fellowship" and "altruism." Sentimentality is a state of subjection to the domination of the narrower emotions, immersion in the saccharine flood of the commonplace, loss to anything beyond the domain of that obnoxious affair so blasphemously called the "heart." The narrowness of sentimentality is its trade-mark: it springs eternal in the smugly commonplace, it flowers to perfection in the provincial, it is the mainstay of the "home"—as such—the Lord God Jehovah of the farmlands. Did you ever hear of a man getting sentimental about the firmament of stars? He may select one, and descend to "Twinkle, twinkle . . ." But let him take the whole magnificent conglomeration just as they stand—and imagine him getting Riley fever! It is as unimaginable as an Italian sunset in Missouri. . . . Sentimentalism is blinding to the soul; it is the pink pillows, the perfumed cigarettes, the bonbon box of the intellect. It is withering, wasting, inhibiting, shriveling, debilitating and emasculating to each and every sound, honest manifestation of the spirit. It is the latter-day Scourge of God. It is the corner-stone of America. . . .

VII

I CANNOT take love seriously as anything like a permanent attraction. I have been in love with many trees, but never any one of them for long, and I would not spend a solid month with any one of them. The only great difference between a woman and a tree is that the tree lacks the sex pull, and sex is after all but a small item in the question of a permanent attraction between man and woman. All that sex requires in the ultimate is a man and a woman, and

sooner or later it loses any strong preference it may have originally manifested. Over against the purely human attraction in woman there is the purely mystical attraction in the tree, and, while I admit that the human attraction in one certain lady is apt to endure far longer than the mystical attraction in one certain tree, the infinitely greater number of trees available and the ease and impunity with which they may be wooed and won gives them, to my way of thinking, the first call. I have never experienced any friction of any sort during the course of a love affair with a tree. Many times I have been in love with a tree which was at the same time the object of several other persons' affections, but the number of lovers, curiously enough, seemed merely to enhance the enjoyment of each. On the other hand, I have often been in love with several trees at once, and none of them seemed to object.

I find that trees are not at all voluble, are usually content simply to listen to what one has to say, have no extravagant ideas about clothing and are on the whole, I believe, rather preferable to women. It is true, I grant, that I have been more strongly and more deeply affected by certain women than by any trees I have known, but it is only just to add that I always seem to end up with trees. . . .

VIII

I HAVE but one passion: the passion for the beautiful; and if this frequently assumes the form of the passion for the true, I can only assert that no change has been effected; in short, that "that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know." Permit me to repeat once more the four elements in my universe: harmony, rhythm, geometry and color. Truth partakes of all of these to a degree, but its outstanding feature is harmony. Truth is the result of the resolution of apparently discordant, contradictory, paradoxical (and so challenging) effects into their relative ultimate concordant causes. It is order

from chaos, symmetry from dissymmetry, harmony from discord. The identical passion which causes a man to write a poem on the moon may cause him to write an essay on the mental (?) and psychic processes of a yokel during amour, in proportion as the particular phase of his passion at the moment is emotional or intellectual. In either instance truth is the goal; and the beauty of truth is to me no less evident (if, perhaps, just a trifle less dear) than the truth of beauty.

IX

Music is, I believe, the grandest of all the arts chiefly because it includes the qualities and elements of all the others and because it is the most unadulterated form of expressing the soul. Next in order comes poetry, then fiction, then painting, then dancing, and last sculpture. As a flexible medium for the transmission of emotional experience, no art can compare with music. The telepathic qualities of music are superb: even the lowest strata of society, sublimely impervious to all the other arts, are in some measure affected by concordant sound—though not, of course, by music emanating from an intelligent soul.

While music, unlike poetry, can never have a *direct* appeal to the intellect, the highest music contains that intensity, breadth and sweep of emotion which, though it does not supplant, at least includes the highest intellect—granting that the purpose of the highest intellect is the discovery and promulgation of truth. I know of nothing on, above or below the earth quite so true as Beethoven's Eighth Symphony—but I should hate to have to put what it says in the form of a logical treatise.

X

IN so far as people, in the complex, intriguing or paradoxical nature of their thoughts, deeds and intentions offer material on which I may work my overpowering thirst for the Eternal

Why, they are interesting to me; but always as laboratory material, never as people. Human nature as such does not move me—save it be to instinctive disgust and rebellion, at least in its extreme and by no means infrequent phases. I can no more get emotional about the good, great people than I can about Alexander Pope; that is, when I am sane. When I am poetic—on the average of once a fortnight—I can get emotional about oysters; but, like all love, such states are short-lived and by no means conclusive.

Once in a while I condescend to read a novel, but not because I have even a temporary flash of real interest either in "life" or the people who go to make it up. What I desire in a novel is not primarily a history of my ordinary fellow beings—their loves and hates, hopes and despairs, ambitions, trials, sufferings, victories, or defeats. These things mean nothing to me, because these people mean nothing to me. Give me a life of Ludwig Van Beethoven, or Samuel Johnson, or Thomas Carlyle, or Machiavelli, and I will devour it. But what in the name of the Seven Emerald Cats of Persepolis do I give a damn about the life of Tom Smith or Mary Jones? What I do want in a novel is what some first-rate man *thinks* about the life of Mr. Smith or Miss Jones; and, fully realizing that life itself has so formed my first-rate man that he cannot but think as he does, I further realize that what I am reading is not after all so much a life of either Mr. Smith or Miss Jones as of one of their chroniclers. And from this standpoint I believe there is a real and valid interest in fiction, and one which no first-rate man need be ashamed of. I believe, furthermore, that this attitude is by far the most efficient and workable ever invented by means of which an author may be attacked, digested and weighed in the balance. Saving the "Christmas Carol," I have never read any of the works of Charles Dickens. "A Tale of Two Cities," of course, is no more fundamentally Charles Dickens than is "Thus Spake Zarathustra." My reason for

not attempting Charles is significant: I once read half a dozen of his letters. . . .

But how many people go at fiction from this standpoint? How many people read "Main Street" to find out what sort of fellow this Lewis was? How many, rather, read it because someone told them that in it there was a character panned pretty thoroughly who was "just for all the world like Mrs. Hodgepodge—but don't *ever* say I mentioned it!" . . . True, I believe that a first-rate biography, or autobiography, of Mr. Lewis (and by first-rate I mean something comparable to Boswell) would be even more interesting than "Main Street," at least to me—but what chance is there of miracles in this great age of steam shovels and super photoplays? There is nothing more splendid in the entire field of literature than a first-rate biography, and nothing more rare, and nothing more difficult.

So that when I read a novel I am actually reading an autobiography by proxy. I am not reading a story, but the history of a man's reaction to life—to people; and I care no more for the story than for the life, and no more for the life than for the people. I care only for the man.

XI

I ADMIT that it is not the beauty, charm and spiritual appeal of Nature at first hand which interests me primarily, but rather what I am enabled to do with words by means of the *inspiration* of Nature acting upon that combination of emotions and intelligence which I call, for want of a better name, the soul. It is not the sunset which I love before anything else; it is the word-structure, germinated by the sunset, which I create and by means of which I am enabled to tell others that there is something in the sunset not visible to the human eye. Or perhaps it is merely something in me which the sunset awakens; but most probably it is something in both of us which reaches toward each other. That does not greatly matter; what does matter is

that before the sunset, before anything else on earth, before even myself, comes the sequence of words which I create. All the phenomena of Nature, while they are my almost constant delight, are really but sparks which occasionally set fire to my soul; and the resultant figures leaping through the fire and throwing unusual phrases throughout my brain, are the important things to me. If I could say nothing about a sunset other than the next man says, I doubt that I would spend a great deal of time in looking at it.

I bring my soul out under the stars and allow the majesty of Nature to play upon it; or, if I grow entirely subjective (or if it is raining) I substitute for Nature the various emotional and intellectual impressions that may at the time be floating about my brain; and in either case a word structure may result. But always it is the word structure which comes first.

XII

I HAVE an ideal, and only one. It is that a man should express himself to the fullest, and be satisfied with nothing less. Although I have nothing more than the coldest psychological interest in a bricklayer, I have a thousand times more admiration for a bricklayer who makes a good wall than I have for a

poet who writes advertisements for automobile factories.

XIII

IF I speak decently of mysticism, I do not thereby war with intelligence. Without intelligence there can be no real mysticism. I have known many garbage-haulers to be affected by the moonlight, but they were also affected by washerwomen and chambermaids. And I have never heard any one of them say anything further about the moonlight than that it was pretty, or anything further about a washerwoman or chambermaid than that she was some pippin. If you told them that there was something stirring within you which was in some not quite accountable fashion striving to connect with something stirring within the moonlight, they would smile in a grotesque sort of way until a policeman happened along, and then refer you to his keeping.

Intelligence in its highest manifestation is to me the ability to survey, analyze and comprehend our emotions; but without valid, authentic, first-rate emotions, intelligence is ponderous, top-heavy rot; and without a respectable intelligence, emotions are lackadaisical, sugary nonsense. Immanuel Kant was intelligent; Edgar A. Guest is emotional. Boy, my cane! . . .



THE reason a man feels foolish when he holds a woman's hand is that he has gone a little too far without going far enough.



THE older a man grows the more he worries about his liver and the less about his conscience.



BEFORE marriage a wise woman distrusts all men. After marriage she concentrates on one.



Americanization

By Samuel Atwood

I

MR. HUMPERDINCK was a hundred percent American. Indeed, his family, by virtue of his having immigrated in 1870, was one of the oldest families in the city. No one had questioned its position, nor its founder's percentage till the World War came along. And then it was only a stranger in the city who occasionally looked askance at the name *Humperdinck* on the thick plate-glass windows of the substantial bakery. Even this was only during the first few months. At the declaration of war, he had removed the glass-enclosed sugar figures of two peasants standing before a sugar cottage undeniably Teutonic in its architecture. Mr. Humperdinck had placed the piece in a sequestered portion of the cellar far enough from the furnace to keep it undamaged by the heat. He could not have borne to destroy it. It had cost him twenty dollars.

Shortly afterward the government had helped him out, for in the second month of the war, Mr. Humperdinck, who himself had come to this country to escape compulsory military service in the Fatherland, had the opportunity of showing how well he had absorbed the principles of American liberty by manifesting huge delight in the quickness with which his son was selected to wage war on despotism. Moreover, the service flag, together with Red Cross flags and reproductions of the national emblem, did much to take the curse off the name on the windows.

126

Strangers could no longer have doubts. Perhaps not the least part of his satisfaction with the star sprang from the fact that it saved him the expense of changing his name. He should have liked to have it changed, if just before the declaration of war he had not had five thousand letter-heads printed. And everyone knows how the printers' and other unions, having failed to absorb the principles of democracy to the same degree as their employers had, unpatriotically, kept prices up.

There had been but one fly in the ointment of his satisfaction. Mrs. Humperdinck, with that inability of women to grasp the higher ideals, had wept for several days after Hermann's departure for camp. Strange, Mr. Humperdinck had thought, that women never could realize how glorious it was to die for God and Emp—that is to say, democracy.

By the time the wife had dried her tears, her husband, sternly entrenched in his patriotism, had settled down to enjoy the war. He had gladly acceded to the Food Administrator's request that wheat flour be adulterated, and considering the fact that the substitute cost him but two-thirds of the cost of the former flour, he patriotically refrained from raising the price of his bread over two-thirds of his pre-war price. It was, though, in his activities outside of the bakery that he was most ardent. He could never forget the first night that he made a speech as a Four Minute Man. It was at the Bijou Theatre down in the southern ward. Some dirty Paddy in the gallery, seeing the name *Hum-*

perdinck on the slide and not knowing the owner, had hissed. Since then Mr. Humperdinck had always suspected the Irish race, and had often remarked to his wife, "You never can trust them foreigners. None of them is one hundred percent." Such distressing occurrences had fortunately been few, and during the drive for the Third Liberty Loan he had had the satisfaction of reading an editorial in the *Times* commenting on the plenitude of his percentage. Mr. Humperdinck thought as he read it that the cup of his satisfaction was full.

If it were, it ran over on that memorable day when the two bands of the town and half of its citizens massed themselves on the station platform to wait for the 2:14 from New York. When his son and the three other men in uniform had been espied on the platform, he drew himself up to attention, and in the genuineness of his enthusiasm stifled just in time a prodigious "Hoch" so that it sounded like a sneeze. But the sternness of his military erectness did not subside as he marched beside his son just behind the band.

His enthusiasm did subside, however, during the next few days, after conversation with the boy. Mr. Humperdinck, who in his youth had been accustomed to step into the gutter to make room for two military men walking abreast on the sidewalk, could not understand certain of his son's remarks about his officers. Nor could he make any more out of certain of his remarks about our glorious allies, and the purposes of the war. He was able, however, by showing him how such remarks would hurt the business and by taking him into the firm, to raise the percentage of his offspring's Americanism from approximately minus five to ninety-four and two-fifths. Satisfied with the result, Mr. Humperdinck looked about him for opportunities of expressing his own perfect percentage.

II

He was not long in his search. It was from the editorial page of the *Times* that he read (he was beginning to read English with fluency now that the foreign-language papers had been suppressed for so long) that the working and lower classes, misled by the example of Russia, were planning to do away with the Constitution, seize all industries, and divide them among themselves. Mr. Humperdinck, imagining three or four ordinary bakers running his business while he himself sweated again before the ovens, with a figurative whoop sprang to the defense of the Constitution. True, he had never read the Constitution, but he had always meant to, and somehow it meant to him the stability of his business.

At any rate, Mr. Humperdinck began from that moment to search for Reds. He had offered his assistance to the chief of police and had come away from that official's office insulted by the suggestion that his knowledge of the language of his former country might make him a successful spy. He had tried to tell him that all from his former country were loyal citizens, and that suspicion ought rightfully to fall upon "them Irish, Swedes, and Eyetalians—they foreigners." His offers of official assistance coming to naught, he started out on his own initiative. That explains how, by hiding behind one of the pillars in the bakery, he heard about the meeting. He caught only a few phrases—"Hot stuff—straight from the shoulder—he don't believe just because a man's got money—"

Mr. Humperdinck needed no more. Immediately he saw Red. But strain as he could, he could not hear any specific details other than that if the first baker would meet the second at eight o'clock on the corner, he would be conducted to the meeting. "Dudel-sack!" (a favorite expletive which during the war Mr. Humperdinck had succeeded in suppressing but not for-

getting), "Dudelsack," thought Mr. Humperdinck, "I always suspected them Swedes. Here's where I make a fool of Chief Swanson."

At a quarter to eight, Mr. Humperdinck stood behind one of the elms on Meadow Street, where, with little danger of his being detected, he could watch the four corners formed by the intersection of that thoroughfare with Main Street. He had purposely arrived early for fear that a glance in his direction as he retreated might have caused his employees to change their plans. As he waited, the suggestion entered his mind that perhaps he had acted rashly in deciding to investigate alone. If the meeting were small his men would certainly recognize him—in which case he had vague fears of violence. You could never tell in dealing with such desperate characters what they would do. He was beginning to realize that his present project was different from making a speech in a theatre where all of the audience, with two policemen and a fireman to boot, agreed with what one had to say. Mr. Humperdinck was beginning to wonder whether he ought not to postpone his investigation until such time as he could provide suitable protection for himself. Fortunately for the safety of democracy, however, two figures met on the corner before he had reached this decision, and in his haste to follow them, his fear was swallowed up in the excitement of the chase.

A veritable chase it became. Stefan and Johnson walked fast. "Afraid someone will see where they're going," thought Mr. Humperdinck as he puffed along a pace or two in their rear on the opposite side of the street. Occasionally one of them turned around and their pursuer was forced to seek a shadow. Finally he thought he had lost them, and increased his speed only to escape, by a fraction of a second, stumbling upon them as they stood, on his side of the street, before a square frame building, its front lacking any method of identifi-

cation save for the inscription in gold letters at the top, *Harmony Hall*. Mr. Humperdinck had heard of it; he knew that it was in the center of the Polack region and had harbored many an assembly which met to christen and remained to brawl. Small wonder that he paused after his quarry had entered. Many a man of greater valor and smaller girth would have done the same.

At length, however, with grim determination he entered. In the vestibule he encountered a giant who advanced upon him with a gesture. Instinctively Mr. Humperdinck drew back, and then recognized that it was the hand of friendship that was offered.

"Welcome, brother," said the giant.

"Evening," meekly responded Mr. Humperdinck, as he winced under the rigor of the handshake.

"Go right in," enjoined the giant. "They've already begun."

Mr. Humperdinck entered dubiously and subsided in the nearest seat in the last row, where he began to swab his face with a handkerchief and appraise his surroundings. He was glad, at any rate, that the hall was reasonably large.

"Bums," was his verdict after he had looked over the rest of the audience. From his vantage point he could see of the men only the unkempt hair and bronzed necks unclothed by white collars, and of the women scolding locks that seemed to arise almost invariably from shoulders covered with black capes and were topped with wisps of hair in turn crowned by dirty hats.

"Bums," thought Mr. Humperdinck. "Too lazy to get anything themselves, and want to take it away from the successful."

When his eyes at length sought the figures on the platform addressing the bums, his worst fears were confirmed: he knew he was beholding a radical and an agitator. There could be no doubt of it. His hair was long. Instead of a four-in-hand or a re-

spectable bow, he wore a tie which took the form of a large lover's knot with long, drooping ends. Even if Mr. Humperdinck had not been confirmed by his reading of the editorial page of the *Times*, he would have known him as a radical. Respectable people dressed as he, Mr. Humperdinck, did.

Assured of his diagnosis, he settled down to listen. He wished he had been there to hear the beginning but resolved to pick up the thread of the discourse as best he could.

"I'm not here tonight to tell you a lot of lies. I'm here to tell the truth, and I don't care who it hits," Mr. Humperdinck heard him say. "You go into a fashionable church and what do they tell you? They tell you believe in the Bible. All right. Take 'em at their word, but don't let 'em pick the parts for you to believe in. Pick 'em yourself and quote 'em to 'em."

"The dirty pig," thought Mr. Humperdinck, "quoting the Bible. He ought to be put in jail for that."

"Yes, begin quoting the Bible to 'em. Quote 'em Matthew V:39, 'But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.' Quote 'em that and ask 'em where they were during the war when the capitalist class were exploiting us to protect the loans of Wall Street. And ask 'em why their five-thousand-a-year parsons with their limousines didn't preach on *that* subject in the days of the draft."

Mr. Humperdinck was horrified. He knew that the verse was in the Bible, but he recalled that the Reverend Mr. Hoffmeir had offered some entirely logical explanation back in 1917.

"And if they get around that just ask 'em to explain what Christ said when they sent the cops for Him. You remember that one of the disciples took a slough at one of the cops, and sliced off an ear with his sword. What did Christ do? He said, 'Put up again

thy sword in place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.' Ask 'em why instead of putting up the sword they forced it into the hands of the boys of the working class. You gold star mothers know how true the second part of that text is."

The speaker paused, and Mr. Humperdinck noticed that several of the women brought handkerchiefs into play. He saw now that the fellow was a pacifist. He longed to get up and rebuke them, to tell those sniveling women how proud he had been to offer his boy in the defense of democracy even though he himself had almost been killed by his exertions in keeping the business going without his aid. He longed even more to rush out and bring in a policeman, but he remembered that pacifism was not so dread a thing since the Disarmament Conference. How he wished that some such strong man as General Pershing were President, who would tolerate no such nonsense. Since he wasn't and since hundred percenters were not receiving such encouragement in pacifist-baiting as in 1917, Mr. Humperdinck decided to wait for more positive evidence. Give this agitator rope enough and he would hang himself.

"Ask your members of rich churches about believing these passages," continued the speaker, "and watch 'em crawl. And why? Because they're trying to serve God and Mammon. They want the money from rich men to pay their expensive preachers. That's why they don't believe the Bible when it talks about wealth."

"Now we're getting at it," thought Mr. Humperdinck as he leaned forward to catch the next words.

"Ask 'em what the Bible says about the rich men that give them money and tell their preachers what to preach about. Ask 'em what Christ meant when He said to the rich man, 'Sell what thou hast, and distribute unto the poor.' Ask 'em what He

meant when He said, 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.'

Mr. Humperdinck wished that he could remember the Reverend Mr. Hoffmeir's explanation of these texts, but he could not. He made a mental note to inquire. He was beginning to take the speaker's remarks as personal, for he himself was the second largest contributor to the treasury of the Lutheran congregation.

"They've probably helped these rich birds salve their consciences, but you and I know that they can't get away with it forever. They can steal from us all and get away with it here, but when they come to old St. Peter they won't be able to explain. Yes, *steal* was the word I used. They make us work for long hours, and don't pay us enough to live on. They hold us up for more than we can afford to live in their lousy fire-traps of tenement houses. That's plain stealing and they get away with it. And they call themselves Christians. If they were Christians they would give their money to the poor. That's the way the Christians did in the Bible. Now listen, folks, I'm going to quote you the 34th and 35th verses of the 4th chapter of Acts to show you what Christians did. Listen, now, and get this right. 'Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles's feet: and the distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.' Now what do you make of that?"

"Why," gasped Mr. Humperdinck inaudibly, "that's not a radical; he is a sure enough Bolshevik." He half rose, yet paused to hear the next remark.

"They get away with it. But they wouldn't if the rest of us were Christians and believed everything in the

Bible. Give me a hundred real Christians, and you won't know this old burg at the end of the week."

III

MR. HUMPERDINCK heard no more. The man was inciting to revolution. He rushed out of the hall, past the giant who was sitting by the now open door, and into the street. He ran down the street scanning the sidewalks for a policeman, and hoping that he would find one before he was pursued.

Before he had gone three blocks, he ran into Patrolman Murphy. "Wonder what's the matter with the little Dutchman," thought the officer. "What's the matter?" he inquired aloud rather suspiciously.

"Down there," gasped Mr. Humperdinck, "there's a Bolshevik meeting."

"On my beat?" asked the officer in a hurt tone, for Murphy was proud of his percentage.

"There is. I heard it myself. The fellow's inciting a revolution," cried Mr. Humperdinck.

"Then lead me to it," commanded Murphy, drawing his night stick and clinching his hand around its handle.

Mr. Humperdinck rushed down the street as fast as his previous exertion would allow him. At length they stopped in front of the hall.

"Where is it?" asked the officer.

"In there," pointed Mr. Humperdinck.

"There?" asked the officer, and then without warning he burst out into laughter.

"Why, what's the matter?" asked the bewildered Mr. Humperdinck.

"That ain't no Bolshevik," explained Officer Murphy. "That's the Reverend Jeremiah Asher. He lost his job for shooting off his mouth too much. His parish fired him. Told him to hire a hall. And he did, and he's carrying on what they call revival meetings."

Managers, Actors and Drama

By George Jean Nathan

I

THE transparent attempt of the Producing Managers' Association, led on by its paid idealist, Mr. Augustus Thomas, to woo the sympathy of the public from the actors' union and simultaneously to counteract the obloquy of the "glorified janitors" phrase heaped upon its members by the unglorified playwright, Mr. J. Hartley Manners, through keeping Avery Hopwood with his new farce, "Sofa, Couch and Bed," waiting out in the hall and putting up the money instead for a fling at Shakespeare was as humorous as it was unsuccessful. This fling, you may recall, was a production of "As You Like It" and was further enriched by labeling the enterprise "The American National Theatre," a designation under the circumstances as shrinking as would be the denominating of "The Kandy Kids" burlesque show of the Mutual Wheel the "Theatre of the Restoration." The purpose of this "American National Theatre," so the salaried idealist explained, was a magnanimous and almost overpowering wish on the part of the managers, too often dubbed commercial, to supply the art-hungry United States with the classics classically produced and even more classically acted. Mr. J. J. Shubert and Mr. Archie Selwyn, explained the M. Thomas, could hardly sleep nights worrying over the sad plight of folks out in Urbana, Illinois, and Fort Kraus, Iowa, who were never given an opportunity to see Shakespeare and had to go on being fed against their elevated tastes and will

with such things as Al Jolson, "Fair and Warmer" and Cecil De Mille movies. Mr. Frazee and Al Woods, the M. Thomas passionately went on, had literally become victims of melancholia because good Shakespearian companies were not vouchsafed to the unfortunate residents of such estimable American communities as Hicks' Creek, Arkansas, and Fort Pilsner, Mississippi. And so far as Oliver D. Bailey, Marc Klaw, Mike Mindlin, Mike Goldreyer and other such artistic managers went—here the manly Thomas broke down and cried like a child on \$25,000 a year—why, when they stopped to think that there were theatre-goers in such places as Peru, Indiana, and Forts Sauergurken and Bierkrug, Vermont and Missouri respectively, who had never seen Shakespeare played, who had actually never witnessed a performance of "King Lear," they simply couldn't stand it. The result, continued the M. Thomas, wiping away his tears and still sniffing audibly, was that the Producing Managers' Association had by unanimous vote—Al Woods being the only absent member, being unavoidably detained in a conference with Wilson Collison over his newest farce, "Penelope's Panties"—determined to make Shakespeare a national institution in the fullest sense of the word, had further determined to put on "As You Like It" as a starter, and had still further determined that the original production and the original company, after being shown to New York, were to be taken from one end of the country to the other—big towns, small towns and vil-

lages alike—in order that the country might know that the managers stood behind it to a man!

It is, of course, possible—very remotely possible—that the Augustus Thomas National Theatre will next season carry its production of "As You Like It," as revealed in New York, to the four corners of the nation, but I hope for the sake of the managers that it doesn't. It will make more enemies for them than the poor fellows deserve. If this production were to be sent on the road one week and were to be followed up the next by the Actors' Equity Theatre productions, they would the third week have to build new moving picture theatres in every town where the productions had been exhibited to accommodate the crowds. At its practical best, "As You Like It"—theatrically the flimsiest of Shakespeare's plays—is little better than the legs of its particular Rosalind. Miss Marjorie Rambeau was the Rosalind of this production. The play, further, was staged by Robert Milton in much the manner that a child learns its A B C's: slowly, painfully, and with a swallow after each articulation. The producer was apparently so impressed with the tremendous importance of the job assigned to him that he prepared each entrance, each exit and each line of dialogue as if it were the star witness for the defense in a murder trial. If the play is to go at all theatrically, it must go lightly, quickly, carelessly. This "As You Like It" was acted by so many Charles Rann Kennedys and Edith Wynn Matthisons. It moved with all the grace and alacrity of a tugboat. Each of its absent dramatic values was made dominantly and ridiculously dramatic. And its speeches, simple speeches in the main as ever were written, were read generally with the air of so many lectures at the Academy of Medicine. The scenes were nicely colored; the wrestling match was admirably staged; Miss Gillmore looked pretty in a lovely shade of blue; and one of the extra men in the Forest of Arden singing episode had a good barroom tenor. The rest, save for the M. Augus-

tus Thomas' still resounding preliminary elocutions, was silence.

II

If the Actors' Equity Association has at heart the best interests of the theatre, and of actors no less, if its officers are not chiefly concerned with preserving the organization which they represent whatever the result may be to the theatre, and to actors no less, let us ask them to remove their whiskers and answer the following questions:

1. If the principle of the closed shop were to go through, what would be their attitude toward a new young actor of talent who, for all his willingness to be forced into their union, honestly could not afford, because of small salary and pressing need, to pay the initiation fee and dues? Would the Equity provide a fund to tide over such talented actors—a year, two years, and more, if necessary—until they could afford to join?

2. If the Equity appreciates that, in order to endure, it must enforce the closed shop and so gather the sustaining dues from actors by and large, what would its answer be were the managers to agree that if it will forego the principle of the closed shop they, the managers, will personally pay the usual Equity fees for every actor in their companies who is not a member of the union, and that they personally will pay such fees so long as such actors remain under contract to them?

3. If a sincere member of the Equity were utterly without funds, could honestly not pay his dues and had to get a job or starve to death, what would be the attitude of the Equity if under the circumstances and with the closed shop in operation he had to accept a job with an assemblage of non-union actors or go hungry? Would it permit him to do so; would it waive his dues—and for how long; or would it expel him and thus make it impossible for him to act with its members in the future?

4. Let us say that a grantedly first-rate producer like Arthur Hopkins were next year to go broke and had left funds

to produce only one play—something, for instance, by Eugene O'Neill. Let us say, further, that these funds were sufficient to produce the play, an estimable piece of work, only in the most economical way. Let us say, still further, that Hopkins agreed to the principle of the closed shop and engaged only Equity actors. We now have a sincere producer risking all his skill and what little money he has on a first-rate play. Would the Equity take all this into consideration in its dealings with him, or would it compel him, before he proceeded, to make the same prohibitive guarantees to the union actors that it would ask of some gimcrack producer?

5. If Duse were to come to America in 1924 to play in English and were to wish to surround herself with American actors—all members of the Equity—but were personally to decline to become a member of any union, would the Equity forbid its actors to play with her under the closed shop ruling? If so, how would it contrive to do so and at the same time keep a straight face?

6. Let us say that all the actors in the United States save a half dozen join the Equity. These half dozen, under the union's principle of the closed shop, are then unable to get work and are prevented from gaining a livelihood. How would the Equity defend itself if these half dozen actors took their case to the courts and appealed to the law of the land governing such a situation in the instance of other unions?

7. Since the Equity is allied with the Federation of Labor, would it or would it not, if the closed shop goes into effect, cause the stagehands, electricians and musicians, also severally affiliated with the Federation of Labor, to walk out on a performance given by independent actors or actors who, because of non-payment of dues or for some other reason, have been dropped or expelled from the union? If so, how would it defend itself were these actors, as in the case of the above mentioned actors, to appeal to the courts in the question of restraint of trade and the earning of a livelihood?

8. A producer, under the closed shop, faithfully lives up to all of the Equity's demands. Three weeks after the opening of a play, one of the leading actors, a member of the union, suddenly dies. The only other actor available who can play his role as well as it must be played, happens not to be a member of the union, and does not care to join. Will the Equity force the producer to close the play and throw the rest of the company, all members of the organization, out of employment? Or will it insist that the producer hire a plainly incompetent substitute, and thus ruin the play, if he desires to go on?

9. Let us say that an actress like Jane Cowl were not a member of Equity. Let us say that one and only one producer in America believed in her and wished to present her as Juliet, his company for the rest to be composed of members of the Equity since he found it impossible at the moment to gather together a sufficient number of talented non-union actors. Would the Equity forbid its members to act with Miss Cowl and so keep her excellent Juliet from the stage? Let us remember, in this connection, that just as Miss Cowl's admirable Juliet was a very great surprise, so may there be other very great surprises similarly lying around in unexpected quarters.

10. The Equity agrees that the Protective Managers' Association is a good thing for one reason if for no other. It enables the actors, through their representatives, to deal with a definite body, a unit, instead of with the many managers individually and widely scattered. Without such an organization as the Protective Managers' Association, the actors would have to go back to the old, laborious and unsatisfactory principle of trying to establish their rights with any number of individual managers, most of whom would be "in conference" or in Atlantic City when they called. The Protective Managers' Association was formed by the managers primarily to fight the closed shop. If the closed shop wins, there will be no good reason for the managers' associa-

tion to continue, as the one advantage a manager presently gains by joining the association is immunity from the Equity closed shop until June, 1924. The day that the Protective Managers' Association passes out, in again will pass the day of "in conference," "down on the stage at rehearsal and can't be disturbed," "in Atlantic City" and "at home with the grippe"—and again the day of the poor swindled actor.

The Equity may win its fight for the closed shop. But it will win it, if it does win it, in a way that recalls Irvin Cobb's answer to a heckler at a lecture in 1917 who demanded to know of him who, he thought, would win the war. "Who," Cobb demanded in turn, "won the San Francisco earthquake?"

III

It is the mark of the first-rate playwright that his attitude toward his dramatic themes is, for all his affection and sympathy, platonic. Unlike the second-rate playwright who is ever passionately enamoured of and mentally seduced by his themes, this other remains superior to those themes that he concerns himself with and, while they move ahead in their dramatic courses, stands aside and lets them pass by him in review to the accompaniment of his warm yet critical snickers. The second-rate playwright cries out in his recognizably typical enthusiasm, "I've got a great idea for a play!" The first-rate playwright scratches his nose and says, "I've got a great idea for a play—if it is properly kidded."

This is, of course, not necessarily to say that the first-rate playwright is insincere, or a mocker, or a wearer of the cap and bells. What he is is one in whom the creative and critical impulses run as twin streams, one gifted with the sophistication to doubt the verity of the strongest of his own passions and prejudices, and with the wisdom to appreciate that this very doubt will the better persuade his auditors of the approach to verity of these same passions and prejudices. He dramatizes exactly

neither his passion and prejudices nor his skepticism of these passions and prejudices but rather the strip of philosophical no man's land that lies between. He does not precisely kid his thematic idea (let the offended professors substitute the lifeless word deride, if they prefer it); he permits his idea rather to kid him, at least to a degree. For, being a first-rate man, he has a first-rate man's distrust of himself and of even the best of his ideas and philosophies. That distrust Shakespeare had, and Molière had, and Ibsen had, and Porto-Riche and Shaw have now. The plays of these men are in considerable part full of that distrust, and it is this distrust that has given birth to a drama which is full, round and complete as opposed to the profile drama of their lesser contemporaries.

One can add nothing to the great dramatists of self-distrust, for they dramatize not only themselves and their own ideas but, ever skeptical, they dramatize simultaneously and coincidentally us and our opposing ideas. These they fuse with their own, or, if they do not exactly fuse, at least permit intermittently to invade. The great drama is not a one-man drama but a two-man drama: a dramatization of me in terms of you. Or, perhaps more accurately, a dramatization by one man of another man in terms of a third man in whom are combined the skepticism of the first man and the faith of the second. This, of course, sounds like a mere tricky way of presenting the ancient platitude that a great play is simply a play that sees all around a character and a theme, that exhibits all the phases and all the sides. But there may be a trifle more to it. For if it were merely a case of presenting all the sides of a theme, Galsworthy would be a greater dramatist than—to stick to contemporary dramatists—either Porto-Riche or Shaw, which I privilege myself violently to doubt. There is something still more to the notion. Galsworthy, for all his ability to see two sides of a theme, cannot, like Porto-Riche and Shaw, see two sides of *himself*. Therein lies the difference. He

writes plays the way a very competent lawyer might write them. Porto-Riche and Shaw, on the other hand, write plays the way each would write them were each an entirely different man somehow possessed of his own peculiar genius. These dramatists, like fine dramatists ever, are each of them Siamese twins of philosophy and philosophical doubt bound together by the tissue of sardonic humor. Great drama is the reflection of a great doubt in the heart and mind of a great sad, gay man. The drama of such a writer as Galsworthy is only the reflection of a great faith in the heart and mind of a skeptic. The gulf is a wide one.

This long and, I fear, somewhat enervating gaseousness is simply by way of getting to the obvious point that Shaw's "The Devil's Disciple," lately exhumed by the Theatre Guild, is still a remarkably fresh piece of work. Written twenty-five years ago, it is as full of dramatic life as the very latest play of such a man as Galsworthy. (Think of "Loyalties" twenty-five years hence!) It is this still fresh piece of work, I believe, for the reasons I have set down. But a very great measure of its freshness and vitality was sent packing by the extremely poor direction and manipulation of the text on the part of the Guild. The latter staged it with all the animation and vivacity of "The Tidings Brought to Mary." The proceedings, brought to a sour culmination through the slicing off of the final episode into a separate act, were cast largely in the vein of a morality play. Getting the funds for a half-million dollar theatre and producing plays well at one and the same time is a feat at which folk more experienced than the Guild have already failed. Basil Sydney's *Dick Dudgeon* was of the sis-boom-ah school. The actor didn't play the role so much as he cheered it. Roland Young's Burgoyne was excellent and Martha Bryant-Allen's Essie fragment sticks in the memory. The rest seemed to be occupied chiefly with romantic visions of the gorgeous dressing-rooms they will have in the half-million dollar theatre.

IV

THE usual formula of W. J. Locke is to take a conventional novel of the early '90's and palm it off for something wistfully new by making the hero a Breton billiard ball juggler with a penchant for Swinburne and the heroine a thirty-five year old Roumanian stenographer with a wen on her nose but possessed of a tender heart withal, and by transferring the scene from the manor house in Chelmsford, Essex, to an apiary in the south of Albania. There is always a considerable portion of the public that is vastly impressed by the retailing of a Bertha M. Clay plot through the mouths of Bertha M. Clay characters deceptively masked in the falsefaces of a Drury Lane Christmas extravaganza, and it is to this public that Locke, a sagacious, amiable and not infertile fellow, successfully addresses himself. By taking over the theme of such a yellow-back as, say, Mrs. Georgie Sheldon's "Grazia's Mistake" or Charles Garvice's "Twas Love's Fault" (New Eagle Series, Nos. 122 and 548), dressing up the leading characters either after designs by a Chauve Souris artist or in the style of the McAlpin Hotel grill-room, and making them talk in a cross between J. M. Barrie and Woodrow Wilson, he adroitly contrives to pass himself off for a quaintly original literary genius and persuades his readers that what they are reading is very piquant and richly fanciful stuff. Locke can write, and write well, but he elects to conceal his talent in this direction by burying it under so many rolls of highly colored and essentially cheap and tawdry cheese-cloth that it is only the trained eye that is able to detect it. His novel, "The Mountebank," now made into a play, is an amalgam of a number of the stereotyped ingredients of his antecedent works. As a play, it is heavy-going hokum of (what seems to me to be) a dubiously profitable hokumishness, slipped over on the audience as something quite *recherché* by *piano* direction. Norman Trevor has the role of the circus clown who becomes a briga-

dier-general. He plays it in the main as if it were a novel by Jacob Wassermann. I can see little in the work of his associates that calls for critical comment.

V

It is the first business of a national or racial theatre to develop its drama at the expense of its actors. The locally launched Ethiopian Art Theatre was a failure because it concerned itself primarily with negro acting and to an almost imperceptible degree with negro drama. What resulted was simply a very poor copy of the Anglo-Saxon theatre blacked up. The idea of a negro theatre, as has been observed often enough, is an excellent one, but the persons back of the present enterprise are apparently incompetent to develop it. Anyone who would choose as the two introductory bills of such a theatre Wilde's "Salome" and Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors" is surely the last soul on earth to guide the destinies of coon art. It would be not less ridiculous to inaugurate the Moscow Art Theatre with a George Cohan play, a German Art Theatre with "An Englishman's Home," or a Yiddish Art Theatre with Hall Caine's "The Christian."

They say, in answer to this, all well and good but there are no American negro plays. Aside from the fact that what they say isn't true, the answer in turn would quite naturally be that if there are no American negro plays there can't very well be an American negro art theatre. It is true that there are no good full-length American negro plays by American negroes—at least none so far as I know, and I have read perhaps the majority of attempts at such plays—but there are some good one-acters, of which the present organization contrived to dig out but one. In a more practical way, however, there are a number of full-length plays of American negro life by white Americans that the organization might have used and so at least in part have ad-

hered to its reason for being. And there are also some very excellent negro sketches by white Americans that would have proved novel and extremely interesting, particularly if acted by negro performers. If the Ethiopian Art Theatre is at all serious and concerned not merely with an attempt to pop the box-office as a freak, I shall be glad to go to the bother of giving it all the information and all the details with which it should have been familiar before it started.

The performance of the Wilde play brought out one or two competent darky actors and, in the person of Evelyn Preer, a Salome as passionate as the wife of a vice crusader in the arms of her lover, but for the rest was a second-rate white affair that enjoyed utterly no connection with an Ethiopian art theatre. Back of the production of the Shakespearian farce there was an ingenious and available idea—the playing of the piece to a jazz accompaniment—but the direction was so bad and the plan so muddled that nothing proceeded but unrelieved boredom. Sidney Kirkpatrick, as Aegeon, was the best of the male contingent in this exhibit. La Preer, who gave a good account of herself in the Wilde orgy the week previous, was under the impression that the way to duplicate her hit was to continue the Wilde orgy in the role of wife to Antipholus of Ephesus, with the result that the audience was somewhat bewildered to observe that the aforesaid Antipholus had apparently married a cooch dancer. A pretty little mezzotint wench named Marion Taylor, without discernible dramatic ability, might be spotted to advantage by some music show producer.

VI

The rest of the plays that I visited before placing myself in charge of the Rt. Hon. Sir Geoffrey Fitzhugh Lancaster, world-famous bartender of the Cunarder "Berengaria" and especially known to fame as the inventor and entrepreneur of the Pztczkv cocktail,

disclosed nothing to make one pause. Thompson Buchanan's "Pride" was undoubtedly composed with both eyes on the movies, if indeed the contract of the Messrs. Goldfish, Goldberg and Goldvogel, Inc., for the screen rights was not already in the author's pocket before he began sharpening his second batch of lead pencils. It was an obvious tear-brewery from first to last: the ancient whangdoodle wherein the father, separated from his baby daughter these many years and returning to find her grown to beautiful young womanhood, cannot divulge his identity to her and aches to clasp her to his longing bosom. . . . "The Apache," by Mary Turck Baker, was storehouse fodder of the first carat. . . . "For Value Received," by Ethel Clifton, was in the early Charles Klein manner, the sort of thing that the newspaper reviewers of twenty years ago were wont to hail as elegant stuff. (Some of these reviewers are still living.) . . . "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" was a reminder of what the theatre and drama were before our commercial managers ruined them to the present hugely improved state. The old claptrap was redeemed at this belated date only by the agreeable performance of the leading role by Miss Laurette Taylor.

Al Jolson, returning in "Bombo," provided on the other hand a genuinely amusing evening. I suppose that, after all, all theatrical reviewers fall into two categories: those who have a good time with the Mons. Jolson, and those who have a good time with the Mons. Jolson

and don't admit it. I not only admit it; I brag about it. I can get more honest low enjoyment out of this Al than out of all the American National Theatres that Augustus Thomas will start until his \$25,000 a year windfall is up. Though the fellow's arsenal of humor is made up of jokes on Ford automobiles, monkey glands, the avoirdupois of opera singers and similar pre-Raphaelite material, he is possessed of so authentic a comic spirit that he is irresistible. They say that he is vulgar. Well then, so am I.

Another music show: "Dew Drop Inn." (I understand that the Messrs. Shubert paid a bonus of \$20,000 for this excellent title.) The star here is James Barton. The M. Barton is a hooper of high and mighty skill, a silent comedian of parts. When he abandons silence, however, he becomes merely one of many. The exhibit in which he is offered is the rubber-stamp thing in which the rich juvenile in the white flannel trousers falls in love with the poor soubrette, in which the chorus men dance around the soubrette and, at the conclusion of the songs, huddle together, catch her in their manly arms and bear her off stage on high, and in which not a small share of the humor consists in such whimsicalities as the blackface comedian's mistaking of a round ex-pectoration for a dime. The best item of the evening is a burlesque waltz solo by Barton, a really excellent bit of caricature.

And now for the Pztczkvs.



Some New Books

By H. L. Mencken

I

SHERWOOD ANDERSON'S "Many Marriages" (*Huebsch*), his first long story in three years, exemplifies very forcibly two of the faults that I have often mentioned in discussing him in this place in the past: first, his apparent inability to manage the machinery of a sustained narrative, and second, his tendency to grow vague and nonsensical when he abandons simple representation and ventures into the field of what is called ideas. It seems to me that no writer now in practice in America can write a better short story than Anderson. He not only sees into character with sharp and awful eyes; he is also extraordinarily adept at handling a simple situation. If any better short story than "I Am a Fool" has been printed in English for five years past, then it must be "I Want to Know Why"—and both of them are by Anderson. But when he tackles a novel, as he has now done four times, he begins to wobble after he has hauled his protagonist through the opening situation, and before the end he usually tries to reinforce his fading story with ideational flights that have nothing clearly and necessarily to do with it and are commonly only defectively rational and intelligible, and so the whole thing goes to pot. This failing spoiled "Windy McPherson's Son," which began brilliantly; it spoiled "Marching Men," which began yet more brilliantly; it spoiled "Poor White," which held up until very near the end; it now spoils "Many Marriages," which starts out better, even, than any of the others.

The problem before Anderson here is to depict and account for a dramatic episode in the life of a hitherto commonplace man, one John Webster, a washing-machine manufacturer in a small Wisconsin town—his desertion of his wife and daughter, and his elopement with one Natalie Swartz, a dull, uncharming girl in his office, daughter to a small German saloon-keeper and an Irish *Saufschwester*. The bald episode is handled with great deftness and plausibility. The successive steps are not only fully accounted for; they also take on an air of inevitability; one feels, like Webster himself, that he is moved by forces beyond him, that he could not turn back if he would. Natalie is as unappetizing as a lady embalmer; every vestige of prudence in him bids Webster to halt; nevertheless, he is drawn into his banal and ruinous romance by invisible and irresistible chains. But, having got so far, Anderson is not content to shut down and call it a day. Instead, he proceeds to outfit Webster with a stock of theories and intuitions that are as vague as the ideas of a New Thought healer—ideas by Freud out of Greenwich Village, by the Doukobars out of the behaviorist psychology—and presently he ceases altogether to be John Webster, of Wisconsin, and becomes a character in a play by Maeterlinck.

What, in brief, is his fundamental notion? As I understand it, peering for its outlines through the hazes surrounding it, it is the notion that men and women are in bondage to their bodies—that they will never be genuinely free until they get rid of

the shames laid as burdens upon Mother Eve. To the end of getting rid of them before departing with Natalie, Webster strips off his union suit and parades before his wife and daughter in the uniform of an artist's model. His wife, shocked beyond endurance by this spectacle and by his statement that, when he first had the honor of viewing her, she was in the same state herself, retires to the next room and swallows a dose of poison. But his daughter, perhaps because she not only hears the words reported to us by the author, but also has the advantage of seeing his facial expression and gestures, seems to understand him and agree with him. Finally, his exposition completed, he resumes his clothes, leaves the house, and proceeds upon his adulterous journey with Natalie, whose drunken mother, having denounced her unjustly for unchastity for years, is now confronted at last with the proof that nature, in the long run, always imitates art—in brief, that lying about a dog makes him bite.

This theory of somatic servitude that Webster expounds is, as I say, extremely nebulous and tantalizing. I am what may be called a professional consumer of ideas; I have read Immanuel Kant, and followed him; I have even read Mary Baker G. Eddy and followed her; but the Websterian exegesis, I must confess, is mainly beyond me. In so far as it is intelligible to me at all, it seems to be simply the old doctrine that we'd all blush less and be happier if we went naked; in so far as it gets past that point it casts itself into terms of a metaphysic that I am frankly not privy to. But even more puzzling than its own intrinsic substance is the question of its applicability to the situation before us. Let us grant that Webster's wife is hopeless—that not even an act of God could make her rise to the philosophizing of her husband. It thus appears reasonable that he should leave her. But why

should he run off with Natalie, who is apparently ten times worse? Is it because Natalie is a simpler and more innocent animal than his wife, and will thus refrain from plaguing him with inhibitions, as his wife has done? Then why seek to adorn that elemental fact with so formidable a soliloquy and so startling a dumb-show? And if, unknown to us, there is something in Natalie that attracts a philosopher—if she is actually a more seemly mate for poor John than Mrs. Webster—then why not show what that something is? . . .

Well, perhaps I labor the thing too hard. The inexplicable, after all, occurs in life every day; it belongs in novels, along with everything else that is real. But when it plays so important a rôle that any reader not gifted with clairvoyance must needs halt and scratch his nose—when the distraction that it presents breaks down an otherwise well-ordered and interesting narrative, and reduces reading to a bewildered sort of speculation—then there is excuse for filing a polite caveat. Anderson is so accurate an observer of the inner weaknesses and aspirations of man, and particularly of the more simple varieties of man, and he has so fine a gift for setting forth his observations in a succinct, novel and effectively dramatic manner that it is irritating to see him leaving the light for the shadows, and blundering absurdly in regions where the roads, even when they exist, are obviously not on his map. "Many Marriages" is boldly planned and it is full of brilliant detail, but as a whole it seems to me to be the author's worst failure. The opaque theorizing of Greenwich Village is in it. If there is a lesson in it, it is the lesson that Freud should have made sure that his customers were familiar with the elements of high-school physiology before he began instructing them in his non-Euclidian psychology.

II

ARNOLD BENNETT'S "Lilian" (*Doran*), one of the boob-flies that he casts into the stream of American dollars ever and anon in the intervals of serious writing, is a shining and amusing example of the eternal futility of comstockery. Here is a story which, in its fundamental morals, is simply frightful, for if it teaches anything at all it is that a poor working girl who submits her person to her employer is, in the main, a very sagacious wench, and one pretty sure to be rewarded in the end. And yet here is a story that, in my judgment as a professor of comstockery, is absolutely comstock-proof. There is not a word in it that could be marked with a blue-pencil and handed to a jury to be gloated over in the privacy of the jury room; there is not a word to arouse the fossil concupiscence of a senescent judge. At no place does Bennett describe in plain language the black sin of Lilian Share, and at no place does he argue specifically that she was a prudent gal to risk it. Nevertheless, that is the unescapable "moral" of his singularly diverting and persuasive tale. Lilian goes to Monte Carlo with Felix Grig, quite like a baronet's wife in a Pinero play, and is on the brink of the abyss of motherhood before a word is spoken of lawful marriage. Then Felix falls mortally ill, and under the influence of the sentimentality of the last great adventure makes an honest woman of her. When we part from her at last, she is the mistress of his business, and very lofty and patronizing to her former colleagues, all of whom envy her unfeignedly. It is a book that somehow shakes my Presbyterian principles. . . . As I hint, it does not belong to the canon of Bennett's serious novels, along with such things as "The Old Wives' Tale," "Clayhanger" and "The Pretty Lady." Rather it is one of the trifles that he throws off to ease his mind and revive his balance

at his bankers'. But it is very pleasantly contrived, for all that—it is the predatory recreation of an extremely skilful novelist.

III

"WEST OF THE WATER TOWER," by some anonymous hand (*Harper*), is an attempt to employ the technique of "Main Street" in the unfolding of an old-fashioned story of seduction. When Bee Chew comes back to Junction City with her inadvertent infant, and Guy Plummer, for ruining her, is railroaded to prison for a burglary which, unknown to the judge and jury, he has actually committed, we are in the ancient, camphory atmosphere of "The Old Homestead" and "Way Down East." There is even a village atheist in the story, who begins to doubt Ingersoll and Tom Paine when he beholds his spinster daughter behind a baby-carriage, and a Methodist dervish who begins to doubt Martin Luther, Dwight L. Moody and Deuteronomy when he views the same spectacle. One can almost hear the sleigh-bells and see the paper snow. But to this archaic fable the unnamed author has brought a great deal of fresh observation of the ways of men and women in a small American town, and a considerable capacity for grasping and projecting character. His dervish is no mere caricature, but a full-length study, with many very prudent and revealing strokes. My taste is surely not for such auctioneers of God, but in this one I have found much that is amusing and not a little that is instructive. The village atheist is much less competently done, and the two youthful sinners are seldom credible at all. Why such a girl as Bee Chew should flaunt her *ultra vires* brat (she calls it Cecil!) before the respectable burghers of Junction City is never sufficiently explained, nor is it sufficiently explained why young Guy does not marry her, brat or no brat. . . . Who wrote the book I do not

know, though I have heard whispers, naming no names, that it is someone not unknown to print. More than once, indeed, an adroit and practised hand shows itself. My guess is that the author is some popular novelist who, after reading "Main Street" and "Babbitt," has begun to be assailed by both conscience and ambition, and is eager to rise in the world. Unluckily, he still has one leg in the sugar-barrel.

IV

VARIOUS books having more or less to do with this great journal of inspiration. Part of the contents of "Teodoro the Sage," by Luigi Luca-telli (*Liveright*), and "Tales of the Jazz Age," by F. Scott Fitzgerald (*Scribner*), and all of the contents of "Picture Frames," by Thyra Samter Winslow (*Knopf*), have been printed herein, and "Druida," by John T. Frederick (*Knopf*) and "Capitol Hill," by Harvey Fergusson (*Knopf*), are by authors who have made contributions of importance to these fascinating pages. "Teodoro the Sage" is from the Italian, and is capitally translated by Morris Bishop. A series of very short stories and sketches, some of them little masterpieces of irony and even the slightest of them pointed and lively. Lucatelli died in 1915, at the age of twenty-eight. It is a pity that the Holy Saints did not afford him better protection against the cardio-renal malady which finished him so early, and a greater pity that he was not discovered sooner by an American translator. The tales of Fitzgerald are a great deal less satisfying. In some of them there is fresh observation and poignant humor, but in others there is only a heavy artificiality. The spread between Fitzgerald's best work and his worst is extraordinarily wide. Even within the bounds of a single volume, say, "This Side of Paradise," he manages to range from satirical writing of the

first order to the cheapest sort of Robert W. Chambersism. That dangerous versatility lies over "Tales of the Jazz Age." It is a book that would have been far better if it had been more rigorously edited.

"Druida" and "Picture Frames" are mainly concerned with the Middle West. The former is a study of a woman—often meticulously realistic but full of a fine poetical feeling. It seems to me that there are structural defects in it—that it loses force and direction toward the end—but nevertheless it shows a great deal of sound and obvious merit, and lifts itself far above the common run of American fiction. The author is a college professor of English, but amazingly unlike his colleagues of that faculty. At a time when most of the rest of them, particularly in the Middle West, were diligently editing texts of Bayard Taylor and John Greenleaf Whittier for the use of sophomores, and violently endeavoring to graft the decaying New England tradition upon the Western stem, he founded a free magazine for the encouragement of the younger native authors of the region, and set out to hunt for talent in the tall grass. That this enterprise was not unsuccessful is shown by the fact that one of his discoveries was Ruth Suckow, whose very remarkable stories have since appeared in these pages. Altogether, his little magazine, the *Midland* (which he still publishes, though he has moved to Pittsburgh), is probably the most influential literary periodical ever set up in America, though its actual circulation has always been small.

Mrs. Winslow's "Picture Frames" and Mr. Fergusson's "Capitol Hill," the one a collection of short stories and the other a novel of Washington life, are both marked by a sardonic humor that often becomes devastating. What interests Mrs. Winslow chiefly is the disparity between the superficial character of people and their underlying motives. In "Mamie Carpenter," in "The End of Anna,"

in "Little Emma" and in various other stories she is concerned with the play of ideas behind the acts of apparently shallow and conventional women—the devious process whereby Mamie gets a husband, the secret reasons for Anna's suicide, the shock that comes to Emma when she discovers that her virtue is worth more than she has estimated. Here, at the high points, we are in the presence of absolute reality; it is a sheer impossibility to question the truth of the narrative as it slowly unfolds. I know of no realist in practice among us to-day who gets this effect with greater skill than Mrs. Winslow. She works on a small canvas, but within its limits she is extraordinarily ingenious and effective.

Fergusson's "Capitol Hill" I have reviewed at length in another place. It is, so far as I know, the first novel dealing with life in Washington that gets at grips with the truth. There is very little in it about diplomatic society, and less about heroic young Congressmen who undertake to drive the money-changers out of the democratic temple, but there is a great deal about the hard-boiled fellows who actually run the country. Fergusson's protagonist is perfectly typical of the faculty—a plausible and hopeful shyster who begins his public service as a minor clerk in the dungeons of the Capitol, promotes himself into the half-world of Washington journalism, gradually edges into lobbying, and finally reaches a place of solid eminence, with the highest gifts of the Republic not beyond his aspiration. It is not a tale to caress patriots, but it is as true, in its main outlines, as the multiplication table. Fergusson knows the scene and he knows its people, inside and outside. The son of a Congressman, he has spent practically all his life in Washington, in and out of journalism. But his book is by no means a mere piece of scandalous reporting. There is not only truth in it; there is also imagination. It

hangs together; it gets somewhere; few recent novels have been more skillfully put together. In the professional future of the author I have a great deal of confidence. He is careful and diligent, he writes simply and well, and he always knows what he is about. His work, like that of Mrs. Winslow, is wholly free from imitativeness. He goes direct to life for his materials, and he presents them through the medium of a well-disciplined and reflective mind.

V

"THE DECAY OF CAPITALIST CIVILIZATION," by Sidney and Beatrice Webb (*Harcourt*), is a book that is far too optimistically named—that is, considering that the authors are Socialists, and go to bed every night hoping that the millennium will come before dawn. What they describe as the "decay" of the "civilization" which now surrounds and kisses us, and whose speedy destruction they pray for, is nothing but a catalogue of imperfections, none of them fatal, nor even very painful. The worst, perhaps, are the ferocity with which war is waged under capitalism and the facility with which the more elemental varieties of producers, such as farmers and workingmen, are robbed and exploited by their masters. But it must be obvious to every calm man that neither has gone far enough to be unendurable. The horrors of war, as I have often argued in this place, are always greatly exaggerated by sentimentalists. Even in the actual trenches, as everyone who has been there knows, they are intermittent, and life in the intervals, to most of the men living it, is relatively easy and even amusing. After all, every conscript who is forced to go there is not killed, nor is every one wounded, nor is every one who is wounded hurt in any very forbidding manner. The killed simply anticipate the inevitable arrival of cancer, diabetes, pneumonia or syphilis, and in a swift

and relatively painless fashion; the wounded, save for a small minority, are not seriously damaged, and have something to boast about all the rest of their lives. If the service were really as terrifying as stay-at-home romanticists say it is, then nine-tenths of the morons who face it would go crazy. Nor is war one-half so awful to non-combatants as it is made out to be, even in invaded nations. Think of the oceans of tears shed over the Belgians during the German invasion! And then recall the fact that the actual death-rate among them was less than the average death-rate in such paradises of peace as Lawrence, Mass., and Shamokin, Pa., and that large numbers of them got rich preying upon their oppressors, and that those who filtered out of the country, after a year or so of slavery, turned out to be so badly damaged by their lives of ease that they were quite unfit for regular industry. I do not indulge in paradox here; there are British government reports upon the subject. As for the effects of war upon persons further removed from the front, we had a good chance to study them in the United States between 1917 and 1919. For the vast majority of such persons, war is not a hardship at all, but a lark.

The fact that capitalistic government facilitates the exploitation of the inferior masses is no argument against capitalism; it is simply an argument against all civilized government, which, as Prof. Dr. Franz Oppenheimer amply demonstrates in "The State" (*Huebsch*), is always and inevitably no more than a vast machine for furthering such exploitation. Oppenheimer, true enough, dreams of a time when the exploiters will shut up shop, but that is only a dream, and of a piece with the one of Mr. and Mrs. Webb. We are living among realities, and one of the most salient of them is the fact that the inferior masses appear to have a congenital incapacity for self-government. They must be bossed in order

to survive at all, and if kings do not boss them then they are bossed by priests, and if priests are kicked out then they submit to oligarchies of demagogues and capitalists, as now. It would not do them much good to get rid of either half of this combination, or of both halves. What Mr. and Mrs. Webb seem to visualize for the future is a sort of superior bureaucracy of experts, like the bureaucracy that has long run the American railroads. But what reason is there for believing that it would refrain from exploiting its vast mob of incompetent and ignorant employers? I can see none whatever. The railroad bureaucracy of today, facing a relatively small group of employers, always including a number of highly-trained specialists in the safeguarding of money, nevertheless manages to butter its own parsnips very neatly. Railroad presidents and other such high officials, of course, receive large salaries, but it is rare for one to die without devising to his heirs a sum greatly in excess of his whole professional income since puberty; the rest is the *lagniappe* that goes with his office. There is absolutely no indication that such experts would throw off their intelligent self-interest if they ceased working for their stockholders and began working for the great masses of the plain people. There is still less indication that the labor leaders who now live by petty graft and blackmail would suddenly become honest if turned into Senators, Ambassadors and Cabinet ministers; on the contrary, it is extremely likely that they would become worse sharks than they are today, and that it would be much harder to keep them within bounds.

I am surely no fanatical advocate of the capitalistic system, which has defects so patent that they must be visible even to such abject worshippers of money as Bishop Manning, Dr. Fabian Franklin and the editor of the *New York Evening Post*. When

the control of Christendom passed from kings and priests and nobles to pawnbrokers and note-shavers it was a step downward, if only because kings and priests and nobles cherished concepts of professional honor, which are always as incomprehensible to pawnbrokers and note-shavers, *i.e.*, to the bankers who now rule us, as they would be to pickpockets and policemen. There were things that a king would not do, even to secure his crown; there were things that a priest would not do, even to shake down the faithful for a good collection; there were things that a noble would not do, even to save his life. But there is absolutely nothing that a banker will not do to augment his profits, short of going to jail. It is only fear of the law that restrains him. In other words, the thing that keeps him relatively in order is the thing that keeps a streetwalker relatively in order, and not at all the thing that keeps a gentleman in order. But what of the Socialist "expert" nominated to follow him on the throne? Is this candidate, then, a man of honor? To ask the question is to answer it.

However, we need not even ask it, for there is absolutely no sign in the world today that capitalism is on its deathbed, as Mr. and Mrs. Webb hope, and, hoping, think. The example of Russia proves nothing. Capitalism went broke in Russia, and is now in the hands of the Jews, but it is by no means dead; once the country begins to accumulate new wealth, it will come out of hiding and begin to exploit the Russian masses once more; already, indeed, it ventures upon a few discreet experiments. France, Italy, Germany, the various component parts of Austria-Hungary, and all of the new republics save one or two are solidly capitalistic, despite occasional flares of communistic red fire. In England one hears doleful prognostications that the next government will be dominated by Labor, but that is but one

more proof of the sad way in which words supplant realities in the thinking of man. Labor, in England, is now as tame as a tabby cat; capitalism has adopted it and put it out at nurse, as it has adopted Liberalism in the United States. The Labor party, if it ever gets into power, will be run by the same old gang of millionaires and professional politicians which now runs the Liberal party and the Tory party. There will be a change in the label, but none at all in the substance; Englishmen will continue to be exploited as they have been exploited ever since the first Norman hoof-print appeared on an English beach. But it is in the United States that capitalism really enters into Heaven. Here alone does belief in it take on the virulence of a state religion; here alone are men jailed, beaten and done to death for merely meditating against it, as they used to be burned for "imagining the king's death." I doubt that in the whole country there are 50,000 native-born citizens who have so much as permitted their minds to dwell upon the theoretical possibility of ever supplanting it. That form of fancy, so instinctively abhorrent to the right-thinking Americano, is confined almost exclusively to foreigners—and, as everyone knows, a foreigner has no rights, even of cogitation *in camera*, by American law, and whatever he is in favor of is *ipso facto* felonious, immoral and against God. Nay, capitalism is planted as firmly in These States as the belief in democracy. It will never be shaken down while you and I breathe and hope and sweat and pray. Long before it feels the first shooting pains down the legs there will be nothing left of us save the glorious immortality of heroes.

For these reasons, though I have read the work of Mr. and Mrs. Webb with unflagging attention and great interest, I beg to suggest again that their title is unduly optimistic.